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HUNGARY: REFORM AND DEMOCRACY

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Introduction

[Text] Sharp conflicts, unsolved problems and ever-
deeper crises have developed within Hungarian society
during the past decade. The unresolved conflicts, and the
ever-deeper crises that extend to practically every area of
society, now stem not from the legacies of our past
predating socialism, nor from external influences, but
basically from historically evolved socialist society's
system of reproduction, its structure, organizational and
institutional framework, the power mechanism's charac-
teristics and inertia, and the absence of a democratic
political system.

Solution of the crises requires not a change of regimes,
not the rejection of socialism as a social formation and
social system, but its thorough, radical reform. The
question and alternative is not whether to choose social-
ism or capitalism, but what type of socialism do the
Hungarian people choose and desire for themselves?

The question is what type of socialism is a viable
historical alternative for mankind and the Hungarian
people? What type of social system satisfies better the
principles and basic values of socialism and of Hungar-
ian society? In the abstract, but with an eye to what is
essential, we may sum this up in three principles that
must be met concurrently: (1) a socialist market econ-
omy; (2) a democratic system of political power; and (3)
respect for, and consistent enforcement of, the human
values we have accumulated in the course of our history.

To date there have already been many variants of
socialism, ranging from repressive and alienated total
party dictatorship, through experiments with democratic
socialism lasting merely a few historical moments, to
streamlined and moderate dictatorships. Our historical
task is to create a socialist society with a democratic
regime, to establish a political and social system that is
the only one worthy of mankind and socialism.

Undemocratic socialist societies weaken, and in the final
outcome question, socialism as a historical alternative.
The main threat to socialism is neither capitalism's
challenge nor the historical disadvantages socialism
must overcome, but a dictatorial political system that
holds onto power for a long time. This threat and its
intensification are not caused by the individuals who are
urging democratic reforms, but by the forces that want to
preserve the system and rigidly oppose progress and

democratic development. Dictatorial socialism that
lacks democracy is not an historically viable social
system; nor is it socialist, but at most only a transition to
real socialism.

The history of socialism demonstrates that its main
threat is not capitalism's challenge, but the distortion of
its own internal power structure, reproduction system
and their relationships, its growing internal inertia, and
the perpetuation of its unsolved structural crises that are
typical of the system. These are the reasons that make
comprehensive and radical reforms necessary. The
nature and direction of the reforms must be determined
by an effective market economy, a democratic political
system, and the enforcement of human and social values.

(The report entitled "Turnaround and Reform" outlines
the alternative of creating an effective market economy
and overcoming the economic crisis. Accepting this
report and building on it, our study is only about the
political system's reform. Cf Laszlo Antal, Lajos Bokros,
Istvan Csillag, Laszlo Lengyel and Gyorgy Matolcsy:
"Turnaround and Reform," KOZGAZDASAGI
SZEMLE, June 1987.)

After the socialist revolutions and changes, there fol-
lowed serious distortions in socialism's political system,
and ruthless power structures that were unworthy of
socialism's ideals and values entrenched themselves for
decades.

The reforms of socialism that intensified in the 1980's—
each of them in a different situation, employing different
methods and proceeding along their own roads (in the
Soviet Union, China, Hungary and Poland)—all
attempted to escape somehow from the "brutal theoret-
ical and ideological manipulation" of Stalin's time
(Gyorgy Lukacs); from the [interlocking] party-state
bureaucracy's grip; from the "relations of production"
that were derived from political and ideological premises
but were hampering the development of society's pro-
ductive forces; from the false ideocratic image of soci-
ety—in short, from the wrong road to socialism.

Dictatorial socialism is a historical maze, a dead end.
This type of socialism was not a historical necessity, only
a fact. Nor is it a necessity today, only a fact that exists,
but not by necessity. This type of socialism is not the
only feasible form and alternative of socialism. It has
never been a theoretical necessity, only a political one,
and now it also lacks historical necessity. Just as any
social system in history, today's distorted socialisms—
distorted in comparison with original socialism's princi-
ples and society's historical requirements—do exist, but
they can and must be changed. Dictatorial socialism is a
consequence of choosing bad policies, and of unfortu-
nate historical situations and missed opportunities.

Although a fact at present, socialism without democracy cannot be extrapolated and formulated for the future as the alternative of the only feasible socialism. If we ask where did we go astray, where did socialism take the wrong turn, the answer must be that this happened where we lost democracy.

Socialism, too, continues to develop within alternative frames of reference that are not closed. Historical alternatives are open ones, and the choice among the socialism alternatives must be the concern of entire society.

For individuals who assume responsibility for socialism, and who are dedicated to its ideals and values, the only acceptable pattern of behavior is to criticize the present conditions and situation with unsparing frankness, to tell the truth incorruptibly, to openly profess their intention to correct the shortcomings, to embrace democratic socialism, and to reject social formations that are foreign to socialism.

A democratic reform movement, a democratically organized political movement dedicated to democratic socialism, is the only suitable mold for alloying into joint action the individual behaviors undertaken in this manner.

Democratic Reform or Dead End

I. Reform, Choice, and Historical Responsibility

Our basic objective is to help Hungarians reach the great historical experience of freedom, equality and democracy; to help them finally test and feel their power to shape their own history and destiny, within the framework of socialism.

This historical experience and political role are not a privilege enjoyed, to the exclusion of the people, by only a single organization, movement or a political leader who has become an institution. The subject of democracy, freedom and destiny-shaping politics is entire society, and not the political leadership.

The leadership in particular cannot be the sole subject of politics. It is not so much bound by principles and planklike ideological tenets, as gripped by persisting fears. A large proportion of today's political leadership is afraid of real reforms, radical changes and society's renewal; of dissent within and outside the party; of the party's own apparatus; of realistically diagnosing and reinterpreting the historical past and the present; of the diversity of objectives and alternatives, and of the need to choose among them.

Because of its fears, the present political leadership is hysterical, suspicious, erratic, and incapable of assessing the real situation clearly and objectively. Fear and suspicion make the leadership arbitrary and hysterical, and it is unable to adjust to society's changed requirements. Today's political leadership is at the mercy of the system

that it moves but no longer controls. It is unable to implement its own decisions and shifts responsibility to society. It has lost control over the system, the struggle for succession paralyzes its ability to take action, and its fears make it mistrustful. Yet it clings to the power of its apparatus to the very last, refusing to believe that the historical period of such politics is over.

We find that a significant proportion of today's political leadership agrees with this situation assessment and is seeking similar solutions for society's ills. But because it is captive of its own system and collective fears, today's political leadership remains mostly a silent onlooker and silently committed to real social and political reforms. As the democratic reform movement unfolds, the political leadership's reform-minded members could become important organizers of the reform processes.

In general, the reform that we consider desirable involves:

- A series of changes;
- Deliberate changing;
- The political system's qualitative transformation and its demarcation from what has to be reformed.

The changes and deliberate transformations affect the political system's:

- Functions;
- Structure;
- Operating principles;
- System-specific characteristics and parameters;
- Internal and external functional and structural relationships;
- Personnel that moves and maintains the system, as well as this personnel's moral and political attitude;
- The system's operating mechanism.

Thus the political system's reform is a series of substantive and formal changes mutually reinforcing one another, the entire system's dynamic stabilization through profound changes. We will outline the detailed program of such a reform in the chapter entitled Program.

II. A Turnaround in Reform

We must clearly recognize that the time is past for centralized, bureaucratic reforms prepared and approved more or less in secret by committees comprising narrow circles of politicians and experts. The bureaucratic reforms that are planned and approved behind closed doors; the half-solutions and "on-again, off-again reforms" that are adopted on the basis of the political leadership's alignment and the balance of power within it; and the reform drives and bureaucratic mobilizations requiring a concentration of forces to implement such reforms, are over. The reforms implemented so far—mainly in the economy, and, to a lesser extent, in public

administration and education—have produced significant partial results, but they neither wanted to radically transform the entire mechanism nor would have been able to reform it.

Relying on the results of the reforms to date, we need a turnaround in reform. Which means deepening, accelerating and broadening the reforms and changing their nature.

A turnaround in reform is not socialism's rejection by political violence and anarchy, but its changing through the democratic force of reform. It is not socialism's termination, but its preservation on the basis of mutually accepted principles. Reform is not the conservation and strengthening of personal power, or of organizations and institutions; rather, it serves to preserve the social system. We require freedom to think of reform and present alternatives, without taboos or restrictions, and also reforms that employ a concentration of forces in the interest of considered and jointly adopted solutions.

The dismantling of the reforms' limits, and thinking the reform proposals through, must be extended to the political system as society's predominant subsystem, to the entire party and government leadership at its center, and to the party as the political system's central element.

The time of centralized, bureaucratic, piecemeal reforms that are slowed down by political fears and ideological rigidity is over. The crises, conflicts and new tasks can no longer be solved by the old methods. The economic mechanism's reform, launched in 1968, ran its course and accomplished its mission: it streamlined significantly the social process of reproduction, increased the economy's productivity, and thereby enhanced the political leadership's legitimation and also strengthened the political system. But at the same time it revealed more and more clearly the limits, dysfunctions and unsolved problems of the historically evolved socialist economy and economic policy. Of course, the reform did not cause the headaches and unsolved problems, but it revealed them more sharply and openly, brought them to the surface, and thereby provided opportunity for their solution, unlike in those socialist countries that had not reached even the point of formulating the problems and tasks.

The two decades that elapsed in the spirit of economic reform may be regarded in Hungary as the historical preparatory stage leading to democratic reforms. As any such effort, also this centralized and bureaucratic reform aiming to streamline the system has been and still is dependent on how the bureaucratic power struggle and the leadership's alignment develop, on the political fears and the ideological and consciousness limitations of the person or persons who predominate the entire system, and on their political machinations to strengthen their positions. The zigzaging course of reform to date, interspersed with sudden halts, also illustrates this.

A turnaround in the pattern of reforms to date will occur if reform is broadened to include also the center of political decisionmaking, if the reform processes extend to all the social subsystems, and if the elaboration of reform alternatives and decisionmaking become society's concern. If society does not remain simply the object of the reforms decided upon at the center, but becomes the subject of the changes by asserting its collective political will in the decisions regarding the changes and their implementation. Briefly stated, if a democratic reform movement unfolds in place of centralized, bureaucratic, partial reforms.

III. Conditions for Reform

Hungarian society is ripe for comprehensive radical reforms, but it has not yet entered the real period of reform. The fact that society is ripe for reforms, recognizes them as necessary, and is aware of this need, does not yet mean that the conditions exist for carrying out the reforms. There is a decade-long phase delay between recognizing the need for reforms and implementing them in practice. Reform is not an objective but an instrument, a political instrument. The decision underlying every reform is a political decision, and not merely recognition arrived at by reasoning. Today it is the political leadership's exclusive right to make decisions about introducing reforms, and to use reform as a political instrument. The political leadership is highly segmentized, but its segmentation is not clear and unambiguous. Ideological inflexibilities, ambitions of personal power, the unpredictable effect of group interests, and the limited experience and knowledge of a handful of leaders determine the fate of reforms.

The power structure's monopoly and exclusive privilege to elaborate reform alternatives, to choose among them, and to pursue reform policies must cease.

The political leadership—uncertain, inflexible due to ideocratic elements, and possessing a very limited knowledge of society—is in a decade-long phase delay between recognizing the need for reforms and undertaking them.

The socialization of reforms is the best way to streamline and speed up reforms. It is a fundamental right of every citizen, and of every affected and concerned group or stratum, to draft alternative reform proposals, to choose among them, to devise a reform's instruments, to enforce reforms, and also to criticize the adopted reforms, regardless of whether the opinion of the citizen, group or stratum becomes the majority opinion or remains the minority view. The final decision regarding reforms must be the result of democratic decisionmaking. Thereby we can streamline and speed up the decisionmaking processes, and elevate individuals to the subjects of politics.

The democratic decisionmaking process (which brings to the surface the diverse professional and social knowledge and the politically articulated interests, allows them to clash, and then integrates them) can be the main element in streamlining the processes of exercising the power to make decisions, by which social reproduction is controlled.

The present political leadership inadvertently deprives itself, but mainly deprives society, of instruments for streamlining the democratic exercise of power, drawing citizens into it, condensing the available information, and making the decisions more effective.

Democratic reforms and the reforms' democracy jointly can bring Hungarian society, which is ripe for reforms, into the reform period, the phase in which the implementation of democratic reforms is really feasible. The democratic nature of reforms follows from two of their elements jointly: on the one hand, from the reforms' democratic objectives and values; and on the other, from democratic decisions regarding the reforms.

Democratic reforms and the reforms' democracy exclude the monopoly and unpredictability of the decisions regarding reforms; streamline and enrich with society's knowledge the drafting of reforms; reveal the foreseeable alignment of interests, thereby making their impact predictable; prevent extreme and socially harmful alternatives from becoming the decisionmakers' will; raise the citizens involved in preparing the reform decisions to the level of actual participants in exercising political power, transforming them from the objects to the subjects of politics; and shorten considerably the time it takes to make reform decisions and to implement the reforms decided upon.

By means of democratic reforms and the reforms' democracy it is possible to enter the period of socialist reforms. The road to the period of democratic reforms, from perceiving that society is ripe for reforms, leads through creating the conditions for reform.

Fighting for and achieving the conditions for reform is also a prerequisite for creating a reform movement. This involves a series of political actions and is the first phase of democratic reforms.

The following conditions must be created and achieved politically if a reform process is to be born that is committed to democratic socialism, regards it as an historical alternative, and opts for it by social consensus:

1. The first condition is to become democratic, by overcoming political fears. The members of society as well as the political leadership must overcome their political fears and ideological inflexibilities, as the first step toward making a realistic diagnosis and elaborating a conceptual plan of reform.

The first step in becoming democratic is "not to fear" (Istvan Bibo). Not to fear dissidents, but to debate them and clarify their dissent; not to fear the power of bureaucrats, but to oversee them openly and collectively, and to call them to account for how they discharge their mandates; not to fear dogmas, ideological idols and obscurities, but to set them aside or analyze them objectively; not to fear our own weaknesses, but to will jointly; not to fear the statutory regulations and legal institutions, but to learn to employ them to our advantage. Democratic reform cannot be pursued in fear. The first step toward becoming a reformer is to overcome fear. The fear about which R. Kapuscinski writes: "Fear is the helpless monster within us. It does not let us forget that it is there. It always binds us hand and foot, and torments us. It needs to eat constantly, and we have to keep feeding it. We ourselves see to it that this monster gets first-class food. Its favorite dishes are gloomy gossips, dire tidings, panic-creating thoughts, and nightmarish notions. Among the thousands of gossips, rumors and thoughts, we always select the worst ones that fear likes best. Only to satisfy and quiet the monster. We see a man who becomes pale and squirms restlessly upon hearing another person's words. What is happening? He is satisfying his own fear. And what happens when we have no food left for it? We hastily invent something. And when we no longer are able to invent something (which happens rarely), we run to others, seek something, inquire, listen to people, and pick and choose among the news items until we have again satisfied our fear" (R. Kapuscinski, "A sahinsah" [The Shahinshah], Europa Publishing House, Budapest, 1985, pp 147-148).

The political leadership's fear of reforms, in addition to its fear of citizens as potential reform supporters and activists, is the other thread that may link the cause of reform with paranoid psychosis.

The political leadership's fear of changes in a society ripe for reforms is an objectified factor of social psychology, one whose consequences are fairly well known. The crises deepen; the unsolved problems multiply; the leadership presents the appearance of being determined, dynamic and active; nostalgia for order spreads; and the gap widens between the leaders who are postponing reforms on the one hand, and society desiring radical changes on the other. Society and politics do not necessarily become radicalized in such a situation. Disillusioned by the absence of reforms, the people turn away from politics, whereby they paradoxically strengthen the faltering political leadership, because its "circles" are not disturbed. The members of the political leadership also become introverted; mutually directing their fears against one another, becoming oversuspicious, seeking enemies and preparing to outlive them, they bide their time. In other words, they have all sorts of worries, but reform is not one of them.

The best antidotes to fear that inhibits the elaboration, adoption and undertaking of comprehensive social reforms is a system of democratic legal institutions that

are based on democratic openness and democratic order, and which provide security by virtue of their predictability.

2. The second condition is what Jozsef Eotvos identified as the first condition for every reform: "The first condition for every reform lies in thorough knowledge of our present situation . . ." (Jozsef Eotvos, "Reform"). In our case this condition is "merely" the second one, because a realistic diagnosis of our present situation presupposes that we first overcome our ideological, scientific and political fears. Every question must be raised anew, and we must not accept any answer without having examined it objectively and becoming convinced that the answer is correct. We must not be afraid of raising questions anew, nor of raising new questions!

Every realistic reform movement needs a true diagnosis of society, because the reforms must find their scope within the framework of the real conditions and exigencies, taking into account the role that the existing conditions play in restricting the freedom of movement. Furthermore, it is necessary to identify what does not have to be changed, what must not be changed, what has to be stabilized specifically through changes, and what has to be abandoned altogether. By overcoming fear, the gap between the recognized and the stated truth must be narrowed to a minimum, and then closed altogether.

3. The third condition for organizing a reform movement committed to democratic socialism is to offer a clear program, with formulated objectives, and to submit the program to public debate. Such a comprehensive program of social reform does not exist at present, at least not an acceptable one. The "Turnaround and Reform" report is a suitable initial program for reforming the economic system. And the Hungarian Academy of Sciences Sociology Research Institute has drafted a program for social policy and social welfare, and has prepared it for wide public debate. But a comprehensive program for the political system's democratization is lacking (and so is the realistic diagnosis that must precede the elaboration of such a program). There is only an ideological report that is "summarized like a program" and is suitable for debate, but it offers no solutions. A task force of Central Committee members is studying the party's internal life, its leading role and the strengthening of party democracy; but, as usual, we know nothing about the work of this task force and the debates within it; we will know only the final resolution. Let us hope that the task force formulates a convincing, realistic and undertakable program, and that its draft will be submitted for debate at least within the party before final approval. We believe that the political leadership which recognized the timeliness and urgency of reinterpreting the party's leading role and of strengthening party democracy, and has appointed a task force to study these questions, will also recognize the citizens' democratic right to play an active role in determining their own destiny and future, a role that includes the elaboration of alternatives and choosing among them. Based on the

conviction that no power may deprive citizens of their right to express their views, criticisms and reform proposals regarding social and political issues, we wish to contribute also this material to the debate on the questions and opportunities determining our future, on the historical alternatives. What is at stake is our future. The future of society and socialism. But this future is being decided now. Let us take control of our future, here and now, this very day! Only under democracy can we be masters of our own destiny! We are convinced that a reform movement which enjoys wide public support and gains strength from democratic debate also (1) enhances socialism's historical stabilization and improves its prospects, (2) converts wide popular masses into politically active citizens determining their own future, and (3) creates thereby a broadly based historical consensus on linking the future of the Hungarian people to democratic socialism. Therefore we propose that our diagnosis of the political system, and our program for the political system's democratic reform, be debated and either approved or criticized, amended and refined in the debate on reform.

4. Within the framework of the process of democratic reform it is necessary to ensure that the reform-minded political leaders, and members of organizations and bodies, undertake the social reforms. Since there always will be, just as there always have been and are even now, contrasting views and standpoints within the political (party, government, trade-union, science-policy, etc.) leadership, they must be allowed to surface and be made public. The crystallization and advocacy of contrasting standpoints must not simply be tolerated, but must be perceived as a natural and fundamental element in shaping the political will by compromise. In contrast to the ways and means by which political unity has been created up to now—namely, by removing from political positions and thrusting into the background those who held contrasting views, and by requiring the mandatory acceptance of the views of those who happened to be in power just then—"it is necessary to arrive at unity from diversity" within the framework of political consensus, openly undertaking from the diversity what is common, the identity that forms the unified will, and also the differences that preserve the diversity.

All this cannot be imagined without protecting minority opinions; without taking proportionately into consideration the aspirations of different interest and the differences in what the various decisionmakers want; without providing organizational and legal guaranties; and especially without making public the existing unreconcilable differences of interest and opinion.

Without this, the fate of reformers will remain a function of the balance of political power, and of the alignment within the leadership at any given time; a consequence of the often unpredictable and incomprehensible "central" or "leader's" will. Reform depends on the reformers' fate and position of power, and not the other way around. Since there are no depersonalized reforms, it is not

reform that seeks out its leaders, but the leaders who seek out the reform opportunities. The politicians who oppose reforms, do not recognize the need for reforms, fail to understand the essence of the reforms, or are timid, will never become reformers. To distinguish themselves from the opponents of reform, or from the politicians who want other reform alternatives, must become a fundamental interest of the reform leaders who understand and undertake reforms, and are able to implement them. Such a fundamental interest exists even now, but this obviously will not be what determines the reformers' organizational behavior if they are overwhelmed by the requirements of conforming to the organization, by pressure to take cognizance of the balance of power, and by the paralyzing effects of over-centralized power relations.

5. A further condition for democratic reforms is the development of a base of support for reform within society. This democratic base, moreover, must be politically organized, able to assert its interests and will, and capable of forcing the political leadership to pursue policies and make decisions openly. The absence of such a base up to now has made the fate of reforms a function of the balance of power and alignment within the top political leadership, making the consistent implementation of reforms impossible. Without a base of support within society, reformers are able to operate only according to the rules of the game in a political environment averse to reform, hoping to pursue a definite reform policy when a favorable development of power relations places them in a strong position of leadership.

This is not only an illusion, but it also breeds fatalism. Moreover, it prevents the reform-minded leaders from organizing themselves into a reform team. A team that directs the processes of democratic reform cannot be imagined without a collective that wields political power jointly, just as it cannot be imagined without a reform base within society.

Without a reform base and a reform team that line up, by political means, behind some conceptual plan of reform, which they then develop, approve and undertake, there can be only political cliques and casual personal relations, the "fraternizing democracy" (Peter Veres) of political leaders who leave one another alone.

A collective reform leadership can have sustained success only in combination with a reform base within society. And the reform base must be able to function as a political force: it must be capable of placing and maintaining reformers in positions of power; and of enhancing their ability to represent interests, assert their will, and to take on and resolve conflicts.

A conceptual plan of reform that is formulated and adopted in the course of public debate, a team of leaders committed to reform, and a politically organized reform base can become a political force only jointly.

6. Reform is always accompanied by conflicts, and some of them may even be of types never before encountered. Specifically for this reason, a necessary condition for democratic reform is awareness of the fact that there is no reform process without conflicts; and that a significant proportion of the reform conflicts are political ones, rather than simply differences of interest, sentiment or opinion between individuals, organizations, workplaces, etc. The prospects of resolving a conflict are the better, the sooner it surfaces, and the more accurately the different interests and opinions, and the proposed solutions, are formulated. Therefore we have to devise a system of institutions, together with a set of instruments, for formulating the conflicts, bringing them to the surface, and resolving them. Without this, the differences of interest and opinion fall into the mutually opposed fields of force of personal disputes, tensions and prejudices, becoming impossible to resolve.

7. The results achieved in the course of the reforms must be institutionalized, and a direct personal involvement in reform must be created. Unless the results of the reforms are institutionalized, the processes could be reversed whenever forces averse or opposed to reform, but paying it lip service, gain the upper hand and "claw back" the results already achieved. The policy of "two steps ahead, one step back" destroys reform's credibility and causes the reform base within society to disintegrate. Reform can be protected only by accelerating it, and not by slowing it down, holding it up, turning it back temporarily or adopting partial reforms. A slowdown follows not from the logic and requirements of reform, but from how the balance and alignment of political power develop, from the requirements of forced but necessary compromises.

Personal involvement in reform can be created in the course of demonstrating to each individual its appeal to his or her interests, in the course of which the perception, conviction and political consensus truly "become a material force." An entire series of financial, professional, moral, organizational and political incentives must be used to ensure that reform-adequate behavior, the acceptance of conflicts, the struggle and effort produce rewards, honor and power for whoever undertakes reform-enhancing behavior and assumes responsibility for reform.

8. The Hungarian political leadership, having overcome its own political fears and ideological conservatism, and aware of the social solidarity evolving within the framework of the reform movement, as well as its own organized political power, must make maximum use of its political scope that is determined by the international and domestic conditions, opportunities and necessities.

Our international economic, political, cultural and military roles, obligations and opportunities must be assessed realistically. We must meet our obligations, and take maximum advantage of our opportunities.

Perception of the international fact that the progressive forces of socialism have already taken over the political leadership in several socialist countries ought to encourage and stimulate us in making full use of our domestic political scope. Among the socialist countries, Hungary has been the first to decide the adoption of truly radical reforms, and thus we have the longest "history of reform."

But the more recent reform-minded socialist leaders are implementing their reforms much faster, while in our country the reform processes have slowed down.

Today the fact that socialism, after its victory, is continuing in the form of reforms is not the perception and undertaking of merely one country's political leadership, but the international experience of the socialist countries' progressive forces and the historical necessity of reforming socialism. The socialist countries' progressive political forces also realize that each country can successfully implement only the reform alternatives of its own choice. On an international scale, too, socialist reforms are plural and diverse, and take place under different historical conditions.

Only this political perception, and adherence to it, can be the basis of international relations among socialist countries that are undergoing renewal through reforms. Only the diversity of socialism can be historically viable, and the basis of the unity of sovereign socialist states.

In a certain sense, these conditions for reform are the first steps in a comprehensive and democratic process of social reform, and in socialism's historical renewal, the start of socialism's real history; and the creation itself of these conditions will produce reform-like changes. However, the gradual political creation of these conditions can only be the start of the societywide reform changes through which socialism will enter the period of its real history: an effective market economy, a democratic system of political power, and the enforcement of humane values, principles and objectives. After which the real history of socialism will begin.

IV. Desirable Nature of Democratic Reforms

In view of the constant fear that comprehensive, democratic reforms will lead to social anarchy, will have unforeseeable consequences and perhaps will reinforce antisocialist tendencies, I believe it will be worthwhile to also specify, as the minimal basis of a consensus and in terms of principles, the elements that do not have to be or must not be changed, and must even be reinforced.

In my opinion, these system elements are as follows:

1. Socialist society must be preserved as a historical alternative.

2. Social reproduction that is free of exploitation must be maintained.

3. The assertion of democratic political principles and democratic political power must be strengthened.

4. The Communist Party's leading role must be recognized.

5. The highest possible degree of social equality, social security and social justice must be achieved.

6. The political, military and economic obligations specified in international agreements must be assumed and honored.

7. The intellectual, cultural and material resources that the Hungarian nation has accumulated in the course of its history must be preserved and developed, and their national character must be allowed to freely unfold.

The objective of a process of comprehensive, democratic social reform is to strengthen, and allow to unfold, the principles that determine the entire socialist system. Only the Hungarian people can be the active political subject of this process. And only a Communist Party that is reformist and democratic, both in its internal organization and external relations, can be the political leading force of this process. The party is reformist and democratic in the sense that it is continuing the socialist revolution within the framework of deliberately undertaken social reforms.

The following would be desirable:

1. That the democratic reforms be implemented under the leadership and guidance of the reformist forces within the party. Otherwise either the democratic reforms' intellectual leaders and base of support within society would be forced to organize themselves outside the party, and perhaps in spite of the party's official leaders; or the democratic social reforms would be relegated to the background. The reforms' postponement, curtailment or bureaucratization would increase political tensions, just as branding the reformers as the political opposition, depriving them of political instruments or, in the final outcome, removing reformist party members from the leadership and expelling them from the party would. Letting antidemocratic and antireformist elements take control of the leadership must be avoided.

2. That debates on reform be permitted, undertaken and organized, both within and outside the party. This would enhance the party's political situation, strength, influence and ability to take action. At the same time, it would guarantee that the debates on reform, and the elaboration and adoption of reform alternatives, point in the direction of socialism's consolidation and development; and that socialism, democratic political power, and the Hungarian nation's cause become alloyed into a single historical alternative.

3. That the drafting of social reforms, and the formulation and adoption of reform objectives be the results of open public debates, and of consensuses reached in such debates.

4. That the outlined nature of the reform processes enable the political leadership to see more clearly its scope in foreign policy and domestic politics, and to undertake with responsibility the selection and ranking of political alternatives within its alternatively structured scope, as well as the adoption of alternatives broadening its scope.

5. That the reform programs be open, alternative, flexible, and capable of undergoing further development.

This overview of the conditions for a comprehensive, democratic reform process, and of its desirable nature, may contribute toward an understanding of how a society that is ripe for reform can be brought into the period of real reform. Some of the conditions for reform have already been met in recent decades, while the other conditions can be created within relatively short time. The gradual creation of the conditions for reform will have a mutually reinforcing effect.

Diagnosis

To really become acquainted with socialist society as a historically evolved and institutionalized social formation, one has to study its political system. And the key to understanding its political system is the exploration of the communist party's characteristics, and of its historical and social role. The system of social reproduction in the Soviet Union and the socialist countries of East Europe, and the political system that determines this social reproduction, have institutionalized certain common organizational and ideological principles and solutions for organizing society and exercising power. Most of these principles and solutions have proved historically constant; modified more or less, they determine to this day socialism's system of reproduction and its system of exercising power. These principles are constant both historically and internationally. Historically and by countries, this constancy manifests itself in different versions whose essential elements are the same.

I. Characteristics of Hungary's Political System

Bourgeois and socialist revolutions alike produced significant changes in the nature of power, in ownership and the relations of production; but they also changed radically the structural and functional relationships among society's subsystems, including the relationship between the economy and the political system.

The most significant macrosocial structural change in the period after the bourgeois revolutions was what we call the separation of [Hegel's] "civil society" from the "political state." The separation of the "political state" based on private ownership was accompanied by the development of a complex mediation mechanism between the two social subsystems. The mediating institutions of competitive capitalism developed from the direction of civil society based on private ownership, primarily toward the political state or, in a wider sense, toward the political system. The operation of the mediating institutions established—in many respects, in response to the labor movement's demands—democratic political rights that became ever broader, at least in Western European societies. And on the basis of these democratic political rights there evolved those institutions for the articulation and mediation of interests, political opinions and political will that are the cornerstones of bourgeois democracy: the representative bodies of government and local governments, the political parties, the various chambers and associations for the representation of interests, the formal and informal institutions for influencing political decisions, the lobbies and pressure groups, the mechanisms for lobbying and exerting pressure. Through this system of institutions, civil society based on private ownership was able to effectively maintain strong dominance over the political system, and to firmly keep the "political state" from interfering in the economy. In the period of liberal capitalism, the relationship between the economic system and the political system bore the imprint of the effectively functioning and complex system of institutions for the mediation and screening of interests, and for influencing political power; this system of institutions evolved from the direction of the economy toward the political system. The political mechanism dominated by liberal capitalism's economic interests used political and legal bans to prevent the development of a system of institutions also from the direction of the political system, for the mediation of government interference. This other mediation mechanism evolved only in the period of monopoly capitalism plagued by crises, as a sort of power-organizing and society-managing response to the ills that were hampering capitalist society's growth and sound operation. Capitalism's economy-centric social structure gradually shifted from this extremely strong dominance of civil society based on private ownership, its practically only society-integrating role. Due to the increasingly pronounced growth of the political system's society-organizing and integrating roles (while civil society based on private ownership nevertheless retained its dominance), there gradually evolved yet another mediation mechanism in addition to the one outlined above, namely a system of institutions that now determined not only the general conditions of the economy's operation, but also its internal proportions and specific conditions: a complicated network of preferences and limits that were set within the framework of economic-policy decisions. In today's developed capitalist countries, a two-way mediation mechanism links the economic and the political systems, while preserving the economy's basic integrating and structuring roles. This mediation mechanism incorporates bourgeois democracy's system of institutions. Hence the sphere within which the democratic institutions function can also be defined as two-way mediation between the economic and the political

systems. This transmission both separates and links the two systems, so that each of them has preserved its own unique laws, scope, and society-organizing effect. And at the macrosocial level it has created a higher type of social integration. Under developed capitalism, primarily political answers and solutions have been worked out to capitalism's economic and political crises. Although this has not been able to eliminate society's basic antagonistic contradictions, it can nevertheless be said that, within limits, developed capitalism is proving to be a viable integration model for a long time.

If we now investigate the macrosocial relationship between the economic and the political systems in the period after the socialist revolutions, we find on the one hand that a politics-centered social system developed, one in which the political system became society's fundamental integrating and structuring element. And on the other hand, that a tightly controlled and all-encompassing mediation mechanism developed from the direction of the political system, through direct economic decisions. This command-directed economic mechanism was not simply a system for organizing and controlling the economy; it was also the most important component in organizing political power, and a factor that decisively influenced the system by which political power was exercised. In the relationship between the economic and the political systems, the political system clearly played the determining role. Through this determining role, politics sort of "descended" on the economy and "suctioned" it into the political system. Due to the economic system's complete politicalization, and to the political system's complete economicalization, the two social subsystems interlocked so that the economy's relative independence ceased entirely. Instead of interfering in the economy from the outside, politics had a "direct and internal" production function, while the economy's market relations were replaced by political relations transmitted by political decisions. The mechanism for transmitting political decisions ensured the interlocking of the political and the economic systems. Political decisions not only determined the general conditions, nature and proportions of economic activity, but they themselves became the economy's organizers and movers, in a breakdown by workbenches and desks. Bringing the plans down to the workbenches meant that the political institutions became integral parts of the economic system. Every economic change resulted from, and required, a political decision. This "absolutism" of the political system's society-organizing function transformed the political system into the only sphere of controlling social reproduction and society's integration. As a consequence of this, among other things, every economic problem and task simultaneously became also a political problem and task, ranging from arriving at work late, through fulfillment of the norms, to the fulfillment of the plan's directives, or even to the completion and delivery of an investment project. If a mistake occurred, then an answer or solution was sought in accordance with the principles of integration and reproduction which determined the system. In other

words, as also Marx pointed out, the political bureaucracy blamed society's every shortcoming on bureaucratism, and responded to it with bureaucratic measures and regulations. Which further intensified the extensive spreading of political power's will, beyond the scope within which it would still have been able to adopt effective measures. Here again, this relationship is not something we ourselves had to discover, for Marx described very accurately the functioning of the political will that becomes excessive when there are no constraints—primarily political constraints of a different content—upon it, or when the constraints do not work against it. "The more one-sided—i.e., the more fulfilled—the political intellect, the more strongly it believes in the omnipotence of the will and tends to be blind to the will's natural and intellectual constraints, and is therefore less able to uncover the sources of social shortcomings." Let us hasten to add that the political will's effective counterbalance can only be a political will subject to a different constraint; for although the objective social conditions and institutions, the material limitations, and the psyche's tolerance pose a very strong barrier for every political will, their "tensile strength" is also extremely high.

To sum up our exposition: it can be said that, during the first decade of Hungarian socialist society's formation and development, the political system's primacy was exaggerated almost to extremes, and it played the determining role in the macrosocial relationship between the economic and the political systems. In part as the means and in part as the consequence of this, a mechanism for the transmission of political decisions to the economy developed only from the direction of the political system. This one-way transmission link between the economy and politics caused the two systems to interlock in a way such that only one integrating principle and one mechanism for controlling social reproduction prevailed: those of the political will. This type of social integration, and relationship between the economy and politics, simply ruled out any democratic mediation mechanism: the control and influencing of political decisions, the autonomy of organizations and collectives, the integration of interests into group interests and their articulation as the political will. Thus it is not surprising that interest, one of the most important categories in political life, simply disappeared from political theory and the common vocabulary. And democracy was not just simply restricted, distorted and diminished in this reproduction mechanism but, as an element foreign to the system, it could not even unfold. Therefore, what Hungarian society experienced in the autumn of 1956 was not just simply an economic and political crisis, but obviously a crisis of entire social reproduction and integration.

The political mechanism's system-specific principles under socialism are historically constant political and society-organizing principles that may change in the various economic, political and cultural reforms, but their essential content remains the same. In addition to

their relatively strong historical constancy, the political and economic integrating principles that are the vehicles of the socialist societies' historical continuity also play a macrosocial determining role in the functioning of the various social subsystems. The political mechanism's system-specific principles determine also the frames of reference within which changes and reforms can take place. Finally, regarding the nature of the system-specific principles' operation, it must also be emphasized that these principles mutually presuppose and reinforce one another, and therefore their changes and historical transformation can be imagined or maintained only more or less simultaneously and jointly, embracing every principle.

1. Centralized Redistributive System of Social Integration and Reproduction

Redistribution is the basic principle of social reproduction taking place in socialist societies. Under socialism the principle of redistribution—in other words, the social system of centralized redistribution—permeates entire social reproduction, and not merely the economic system. The necessary concomitants of centralized redistribution are: (a) a power apparatus to carry out the functions of redistribution; and (b) development of a system of highly hierarchic subordination, and its integrating function in the processes of reproduction.

The most important characteristics of the redistributive reproduction system in socialist societies are as follows:

a. Redistribution is not partial and does not dominate merely the economic sphere, but prevails in every sphere of social reproduction.

b. Redistribution is initially one-leveled and changes only later into two-level (national and megye) redistribution.

c. Redistribution is based on political society-organizing principles and ideology.

d. Political power apparatuses do the redistribution, and to participate in discharging the redistribution functions is the most important privilege of political power. The redistribution processes are the political system's most important component. They interweave the economic processes with the political ones, and convert the basic economic functions into an integral part of political redistribution.

e. The withdrawal of income, and its central distribution and redistribution are not normative, but change rapidly and, for the most part, unpredictably. This makes the specific targets of distribution and redistribution more dependent, and long-range planning at the microeconomic level becomes impossible. There is no public oversight of the distribution system.

f. There is a power relationship of vertical superordination and subordination between the distributing and redistributing bureaucracy and the specific targets. The outcome of the bargaining between subjects of unequal power status is hardly predictable. The unequal power statuses and bargaining positions have become permanent, and the most important factor in determining social status as well.

g. Ideological and political principles and the specific balances of power, rather than professional sense and economic laws, essentially determine the entire system of distribution and redistribution. Effective lobbying and interest assertion are based: (1) on ideocratic reasoning that cites the "interests" of entire society, those of CEMA, and political interest; and (2) on converting an organizational, personal or political-power advantage into an economic advantage in the bargaining processes, and then transforming this economic advantage into one of political power.

h. Due to the perpetuation of their low priority in redistribution, the deterioration of several industries is catastrophic, and their multiply disadvantaged state has become chronic. (Application of the "what's left" principle; the absence of instruments for lobbying and asserting interests; a counterselective and featherbedding role in providing jobs for cadres and members of the apparatus; low levels of performance in the functions of these industries, making them the targets of political and public criticism, etc.)

i. The transformation, after 1968, of the command-directed economic system into a sytem of indirect economic management. To borrow a phrase from Laszlo Antal's exposition, redistribution based on the branch principles changed into functional redistribution.

2. Party-Centric Political System

In distinction from the state-centric political system typical of capitalism, socialist society's political system is a party-centric system, one in which the communist party occupies the center of power that integrates society and controls social reproduction. The state organs, particularly the ones in central positions of power, have in part been merged into the party organizations; and in part have been moved from the center of power to perform primarily executive functions. The state's traditional representative bodies have lost their self-governing functions completely.

The model of a bicentric political system can best be perceived under socialism, as a result of the historical process in which the state-centric political superstructure changed into a party-centric one. Whereas in the social

formations preceding socialism the political superstructure—be it civil society's "loose" political superstructure, or a distinctly different one linked by mediations—consisted essentially of the entire complex of state-type organs of power, including the institutions associated with them.

The fact that these institutions included also political parties in their many different historical forms (guild and estate parties, elector parties, parliamentary parties, etc.) is immaterial here. The political parties' role was closely subordinated to the state, and often was of a temporary nature.

During the 20th century, the established mass parties with professional organizations (the organizational mass parties, as they are referred to in the literature) shed the state administration's power over them, by deploying the "organization weapon," "taking politics to the streets," and organizing and using the mass strength of the "politically nameless." In the case of socialist revolutions, this shedding of the state administration's power meant that the "tightly organized" political parties of the Leninist type, with specific organizational, ideological and operating structures of their own, clearly gained supremacy over the state organs. The Marxist-Leninist parties used the formula of the party's leading role to express this deliberately assumed historical role. It led to the emergence of party-centric political systems, in contrast with the state-centric structures of the earlier political systems. This transformation of the political superstructure's power structure did not make the state redundant, but it did develop an extremely close relationship between the two types of political organ, as well as their occasional overlapping and interlocking. This new power structure altered the function and social role of essentially every political institution.

Earlier, under the state-centric political system, the political parties and other political organizations or movements fought one another and engaged in politics in the state's representative bodies and the administrative organs. In other words, the state was the natural and legally established arena for the political and interparty battles. Under the party-centric political system, however, this natural arena for politics lost its significance. At the same time, the state bodies lost their authority to make important social-policy decisions and ceased to be the most important organs exercising power.

Actual authority to make policy decisions was transferred to political institutions, and occasionally to bodies that became intertwined with party organizations. This intertwining and interlocking also meant the loss of the government organs' independent political aspect. But the other essential function of state organs—namely, the analysis of interest aspirations and political wills, and providing a natural terrain for such analyses—was not transferred to the party because, with the development of the one-party system, the mechanism of the highly centralized and so-called tightly organized party made it

impossible to let the interest aspirations and political opinions surface, clash, and then crystallize in the debates preceding the decisions.

The state organs were assigned to the political system's executive center; while the party, possessing actual authority to make decisions, remained at the political system's center of power. But the party—despite of its monopoly of power, and regardless of how closely it was merged in some instances with state organs—was unable to carry out the wide-ranging and specific tasks of exercising power. Consequently, the need remained for the state's well-trained, professional and specialized administrative apparatuses, and for efficiently functioning administrative organizations.

A strong effort was launched during the past two decades to strengthen the party's leading role and rid it of executive functions, by transferring them to state organs.

Although this effort has wrought changes, the integration of power typical of the political system as a whole, the party-centric political system invariably remains.

3. Party Wields Exclusive Power

At our party-centric political system's center of power, a power structure has evolved that Gramsci calls a monopolistic power bloc. The party's position of exclusive power essentially makes superfluous any real, distinct political movement or organization. Which leads to the peculiar situation that it has become the party's interest and task to "maintain," for the sake of certain appearances, the sociopolitical organizations (trade unions, youth organizations, and the PPF, the umbrella organization that "creates unity from diversity") that lost their distinctness and particular function. This is how the three types of organ developed that are typical of socialist societies' political system: (a) the "tightly organized" ruling party occupying a position of exclusive power; (b) the state organs at the executive center; and (c) the sum total of sociopolitical organizations that are linked, through their central governing bodies and officials, to the governing bodies of the party (see, for example, the composition of the Politburo, seats on which are filled by virtue of organizational status; and the same holds true for the regional party committees and party executive committees as well).

4. Strong Vertical and Horizontal Centralization of the Spheres of Decisionmaking Authority

From the very beginning, strong centralization of the spheres of authority has been one of the most characteristic features of socialist societies' political and economic systems, and of the integration mechanism that links the two social subsystems. Actually, a decentralized social system and decentralized management have not developed to date in any of the socialist countries. The various decentralization reforms always foundered on those

interdependent and mutually reinforcing principles that must be changed simultaneously if any real decentralization of the economy, politics, and power structure is to take place.

Although the spheres of authority remain highly centralized, the nature and content of centralization, and centralized management's potential have changed considerably in Hungary. The following factors enhanced to a large extent the initial effectiveness of centralized management, and then its survival even when its low effectiveness became increasingly evident: (a) strong centralization within the party itself, which made the communist parties truly powerful and effective organizations, both before and after gaining power; (b) attainment of the revolutionary social changes that the party announced, which required very highly hierarchic party and state apparatuses, ready and willing to line up fully and immediately behind the central decisions; (c) the Stalin-Preobrazhenskiy theory and practice of state intervention demanded a highly centralized political mechanism—Stalin claimed, with conviction and indignation, that "the rotten bourgeois theory of nonintervention must be cast aside"—and, in Stalin's time, a political mechanism developed that amalgamated and unified the organization and operating principles of the etatist, militarist and "tightly organized" (Leninist) party. Hungary, too, eventually adopted this blueprint of political power, and in a certain sense it proved extremely successful, first in squeezing out and liquidating political opponents, and second in the practical application of the proclaimed principles; and (d) this "sense of success," and the related concern that abandoning centralization would weaken society's integration and jeopardize political unity, may be regarded as a factor of social psychology that contributed in large measure toward the preservation of strong centralization.

The centralization that became typical in Hungary by the early 1950's, and which operated on the basis of entirely irrational principles, has essentially changed into rational centralization during the past 25 years. The rationalization of centralized management ties in primarily with the fact that various professional rationalities have been built into management's operating mechanism. The most spectacular rationalization has taken place in conjunction with building economic professional rationality into the mechanism; and although not on the same scale, the incorporation of legal, administrative, cultural, esthetic, organizational, etc. rationalities also intensified considerably. This rationalization significantly increased the effectiveness of not only the economy but of political legitimation as well, and it also enhanced society's ability to learn and its willingness to innovate. This can be established primarily in contrast to those socialist countries where similar rationalization did not occur, while the centralized organization of their societies has been retained.

Of course, centralization and decentralization cannot be contrasted as one being absolutely good, and the other absolutely bad. Exactly which allocation of tasks and spheres of authority, respectively in what ratio, is the best mode of organizing the power structure can be decided only on the basis of the specific historical situations and the nature of the tasks that society's political leadership sets. Furthermore, there is no such thing as centralization and decentralization in general; there are only historically specific forms of the power structure's centralized or decentralized organization. But centralized management nevertheless has three principles that are the characteristics of every centralization, and of every managing mechanism operating on the basis of highly centralized spheres of authority. These principles are:

a. The principle of distance;
b. The principle of hierarchy;
c. The principle of secrecy.

(1) In the case of highly centralized spheres of authority, the principle of distance means that the decisionmakers are located far from those whom the decisions affect. Thus centralization means not that all decisions are made centrally, but that they are made three, four, and sometimes even more levels higher up than where the information necessary to make the decisions is available. Consequently, on the one hand, the decisionmakers' incompetence has become chronic; and on the other, those whom the decisions affect are never certain what the decisions will be. Under this highly centralized mechanism, the decisionmakers are forced to rely on the specialized apparatuses that prepare the decision alternatives, professionally and politically. But the decisionmakers are also exposed to the professional apparatuses' information-embellishing and -blocking mechanism, which is associated with the environment of organizational interests and power, and necessarily evolves in every excessively hierarchic organization.

This shifting of decisionmaking authority higher than the desirable level runs through the entire chain of command, down to the last organization and official implementing the decision or affected by it. Thus there has developed a vertically centralized decisionmaking mechanism in which the principle of distance and its consequences apply at every level, and to every affected organization.

(2) The principle of hierarchy in the case of highly centralized spheres of authority means that every problem, task and conflict—in other words, every social fact requiring a decision—is built and fed into the hierarchic chain along which it is forced to travel upward, through several hierarchic remittals, until a decision is made. And then the decision must travel back again, along the same vertical chain of institutions that previously the request for a decision had gone through. A "long-distance" hierarchic chain slows down extremely the decisionmaking processes. Furthermore, both the request for a decision and the decision itself "suffer" all

the changes that are specific organizational characteristics of hierarchic organizations. (The distortion and blocking of information; the deliberate slowdown or acceleration of the decisionmaking process; the often unpredictable effects of the alignment of the informal sphere's interests and influence; decisions that are too general; the often confusing "interpretation" of the too general decisions; unsatisfactory decisions generate a need for further decisions, etc.)

(3) The principle of secrecy is typical of every administrative apparatus, but it applies increasingly to an over-centralized or an interlocking, centralized administrative apparatus. A classified, secret, or top secret stamp on the background information and decision alternatives (and in most cases even on the decisions themselves, including the reasons adduced for making them) is a factor that enhances the power of the administrative apparatus. Of course, the internal official solidarity, seclusion and deliberate maintenance of distance, which Max Weber described, are contributing factors. But the most important factor, in my opinion, is that the withholding and selective release of information is one of the most important means of strengthening power, enhancing the assertion of interests, and ensuring priority for one's own interests.

Naturally, the three general principles of centralization apply within the framework of specific, substantive and historical, social characteristics, the most important among which are the system-specific principles that reinforce centralized management, making it practically unchallengeable. (For example, centralization as the concomitant of organizational concentration, redistribution and political overdetermination, the concentration of power and the mixing of the spheres of authority, etc.) There is one feature of centralization to which I would like to call particural attention: namely, that decisions in the socialist countries' political mechanism are centralized not only vertically, but horizontally as well. (The vertical centralization of decisions is unambiguous. But not so unambiguous is the fact that at the different—municipal, megye, and central—levels the vertically centralized decision chains of various social spheres are centralized also horizontally in a few organizations. Such organizations are the megye and municipal party executive committees, party apparatuses, and party committees. Of course, there is horizontal concentration of the spheres of authority also at the central—i.e., national—level as well.)

The advantage of vertical and horizontal centralization is that the centers of decisionmaking authority at the various levels have comprehensive command of all (economic, cultural, law-enforcement, etc.) spheres in the given area, on the basis of the obtained information and adopted decisions. But the drawback of this two-directional concentration of power is that, in contrast to the decisionmakers' presumed ómnicompetence, their

chronic incompetence and forced reliance on the apparatuses preparing the decisions become more pronounced, the decisionmaking process becomes extremely slow, and the decisions will be too general, due in part to the incompetence, and in part to the effects of the informal interests and influences that do not lend themselves to public oversight but are nonetheless brought to bear the more forcefully on the decisions.

In any case, our managing and society-organizing mechanism has been rationalized significantly during the past 25 years, but the vertical and horizontal centralization of the spheres of authority still persists, although in slightly milder form.

In conformity with the objective regularities, decisionmaking incompetence has become chronic in our centralized system of exercising decisionmaking authority. Due to the operation of the principle of distance, the decisionmaking organizations, bodies and individuals lack the specific professional and political information, and knowledge of the specific situation, that would enable them to make "correct" or at least "satisfactory" decisions. Not because they are mentally deficient, but due to their organizational position and how they are being kept informed there.

The scope of the information available to decisionmakers is burdened in large measure by ideological and political premises (in other words, it is ideocratically saturated); it is also random (due to the blocking and distortion of information, by which the organization's apparatus and the one preparing the decision protect and advance their own interests); and lacks adequate professional information. Many decisionmakers are aware of this objective decisionmaking situation, and they respond to it in various ways. The most typical patterns of behavior reflecting the roles that organizational decisionmakers assume are as follows:

a) The blusterer masks his ignorance and incompetence by bullying, aggressive self-assurance and political bluffing.

b) The "captive of the apparatus" neither can nor wants to free himself from the influence of the bodies and individuals preparing the decisions. Identifying with the system or organized unaccountability, he is incapable of making decisions independently and blends into the system smoothly, whereby he gains organizational security for himself and avoids having to assume responsibility.

c) The "overburdened" leader wants to remedy his lack of information and to become competent, by learning what cannot be learned. He becomes lost in detail and works his apparatus to death. But the latter develops a special defense and rejection mechanism to assert indirectly its own interests and real decisionmaking authority. The "leader who wants to learn everything" will sooner or later become the victim of the conflict that

erupts between him and his apparatus, which finds his incompetent interference increasingly intolerable (because the leader's mania to learn burdens the apparatus with the impossible "additional task" of tutoring him).

d) The leader who does not trust his own apparatus and therefore uses outside, unofficial experts and advisers, and independent report writers and analysts. This leader is only partly the captive of his own apparatus, and partly the captive of the experts whom he has subjectively chosen and understood, well or badly. But even so he is unable to effectively and truly enforce the decisions he makes under the influence of his outside experts, when those decisions are in conflict with the interests and views of his own apparatus. Sooner or later, this leader will urge and force through personnel changes that will cause further organizational conflicts and fuel bureaucratic mistrust, and to which the members of the organization will respond by holding back their performance or by keeping it at a minimum. The overwhelming majority of the former "independent experts" placed in decisionmaking positions of power are unsuitable for leadership tasks and, after a time, they too become victims of the same system.

e) The leaders who possess adequate professional information and suitable ideas, and are able to organize their decision-preparing apparatus effectively enough, will sooner or later become the victims of the centralized and ideocratically determined power structure, the focal points and vehicles of its conflicts. They are unable to avoid the objective regularities of power, ideology and organization, even if they clearly understand the laws governing these realities.

[5. Organizational Concentration]

The concentration of organizations began with the multiparty system's liquidation and then spread to the political youth organizations and the trade unions.

The centralization in politics and the economy was accompanied by organizational concentration that seemed unstoppable and further reinforced the centralization of management.

Organization concentration began at the level of the political institutions, with liquidating the political parties, paralyzing the Popular Front, reorganizing the trade unions along vertical lines, and merging the youth organizations of the various strata. It continued in the economic sphere, with the consolidation and merger of business organizations. Highly concentrated at its organizational level, the economic sphere responded by further reinforcing the excessive centralization of the organizations within the party and the state administration, and the interlocking of economic and political tasks.

With practically elemental force, the mechanism of the organizations' vertical and horizontal concentration reacted upon, and further reinforced, the centralization of the spheres of authority.

In the process of concentration we distinguish two types of organizational concentration: first, the fusion of organizations, with the youth organizations as the most typical case; and second, the subordination of organizations to a central organizational apparatus, which has been typical of the trade unions (see the relationship between the SZOT [Central Council of Trade Unions] and the vertical trade unions). In the case of the trade unions, however, their organizational restructuring also reinforced concentration, when vertical unions (on the Soviet model) were formed to replace the horizontal unions. In the case of the vertical unions concentrated into mammoth organizations, not only their organizational growth intensified their drifting away from the labor movement, but also the fact that the vertical unions ceased to be homogeneous in their membership. The members of the Teachers' Union as a vertical union, for example, are not only the teachers but also the schools' other personnel, ranging from school electricians to bus drivers and janitors, down to the cleaning women.

The absence of organizational homogeneity, and of a homogeneity of interests, destroyed any possibility of identifying with the organization. Anyhow, political integration based on common interests did not long remain a legalized function of the trade unions, nor of the other sociopolitical organizations.

It must be emphasized, however, that organizational concentration in itself cannot be regarded as a negative phenomenon, especially not in the case of political organizations, because either of the mentioned forms of organizational concentration ensures more effective participation in the political system. In the case of organizational concentration, furthermore, it is also possible to preserve the organizational subdivisions' political autonomy and distinctness.

Centralization of the spheres of authority enhanced the political organizations' concentration; the consolidations and mergers of business organizations initially preceded, but eventually tended to trail behind, the political organizations' concentration. The consolidations and mergers of business organizations continued (due in part to the inertia of the process once begun, and in part to the reinforcing effects of the other system-specific principles) even after their exceptional efficiency-reducing effect became evident to the political leadership itself. The fact that no increase occurred in the number of business organizations even after the new economic mechanism's introduction, rather the organizational concentration intensified further, clearly proves

this. It took exceptionally drastic central intervention to break up the trusts and other "large enterprises," but we are still far from the desirable number of small and medium-sized plants.

The mutually reinforcing effect of centralization and organizational concentration is evident in that the waves of recentralization (which keep recurring inexorably and persistently) have always reinforced the processes of organizational concentration, not only when that was not their intention, but even when they specifically wanted to avoid such an effect. Naturally, the mammoth organizations' external direction and internal management were centralized, which reinforced further centralization, despite the intentions.

6. Concentration of Power and Bureaucratic Pluralism

In contrast with Marx's original ideas (compare what he wrote about a commune-type state in his analysis "The Civil War in France")—i.e., that in a democratic state system built from below, parliament was to be the embodiment of the "unity of power," contrary to the principle and practice of the separation of powers in bourgeois states—the unity of power under socialism has been realized not in an organized state machinery, but in the party apparatus or, more accurately, in the interlocking of the party and state bureaucracies. Here the unity of power means the exclusive wielding of power, and its monocentric organization and centralized vertical hierarchy. The party's functions are unlimited within the interlocking party, state, economic and military organizations of power; as a rule, the processes of management have not been formalized and are not open to public scrutiny, but take place within the framework of a special political bureaucracy.

The dominant element within the political bureaucracy is the party bureaucracy. In the vertical hierarchy of the concentration of power, the party bureaucracy weaves through the system of exercising power at every level, on the basis of the branch-enterprise and territorial principles.

Due to the vertical concentration of power, however, the local party organs lack autonomy; they wield bureaucratic power only in the areas "salvaged" from central intervention.

The concentration of power stems from the perception of the party as the vanguard, the perception of its historical mission, its self-image of omnipotence and omnicompetence, and the vindication of its exclusive power role.

The instruments and institutions that mediate and realize the concentration of power are as follows:

- Interlocking organizations;
- Pluralism of the positions of power that party, government, and business leaders hold simultaneously;

- Institutionalized simultaneous memberships in several organizations;
- Centralization within the party spreads to state, business, etc. organizations;
- Party bureaucracy's unlimited license to interfere and assume authority, and lack of protection for autonomy and against infringements of authority;
- A system of personal subordination resulting from the party's authority over the training and placement of cadres.

Thus, the unity of power in socialism's political system essentially means the monopolistic, vertical concentration of the power of the various (party, state, economic, etc.) apparatuses, excluding any institutional separation of powers, and protection against infringements of authority, or autonomy.

It would be more appropriate to call this system a monocentric concentration of power, rather than to speak of unified power or the unity of power. Because real unified power, and unity of power, can exist only in multipole power-separation systems that are held together by political consensus. The basis of unity formed from diversity is to recognize and preserve the diversity, the pluralism of power, and to forge a political consensus by compromise.

Naturally, there is segmentation of interests also within this monocentric political system. The lobbying and decision-preparing organizations of the various social strata and groups that want to have their interests taken into consideration, and the assertion of the particular interests of individuals and cliques, have preserved as a matter of course a certain nonformalized pluralism of interests and power. But because this segmentation, and pluralism, of interests and politics that divide these organizations and apparatuses are not identical with the real political and interest segmentation and pluralism existing within society, we call them bureaucratic (bureaucracy-dividing) pluralism and bureaucratic political segmentation, respectively.

This bureaucratic pluralism, which asserts itself interminably, relaxes somewhat the concentration of power and, in a certain sense, has a system-improving and -correcting role, but only within the nonformalized power, interest and organizational structures. The pluralism of interests, organizational positions and positions of power is unfamiliar to society, and it is unable to distinguish the individual nonformalized divisions of power, the differences in interests and political views, and the persons who represent or hold them.

Without adequate knowledge of the content and nature of the political system's pluralism, even the political leadership starts out from a hazy policy that only ideology assumes, as one of its theses, to be unified; from an unstructured and homogeneous system of political views and wills, which is entirely an illusion and self-deception. Instead of recognizing and tolerating the interminable

variety and pluralism of interests and political views, the political leadership that relies on the illusory uniformity of political wills and interests fails to understand the internal segmentation not only of society, but of its own apparatus as well. Despite its best intentions, therefore, this political leadership remains the captive of its own organization, builds a political structure from illusions, and consistently forces its ideological and social "reconfirmation."

7. Administrative Apparatus Grows in Size To Cope With Its Centralization-Inflated Agenda

The economy's "suctioning" into the political system, and the political integration that served as a substitute for the economy's production relations, generated a huge volume of administrative work. To cope with it, the political and economic bureaucracy became enormously inflated. According to official statistics, by 1954 the personnel of state administration increased by 164 percent over 1949; and the personnel administering the economy, by 357 percent over 1938.

At the beginning of the 1950's, the power monopoly's enormous bureaucracy produced a huge volume of regulations, directives, individual interventions and licenses, all of which stemmed from the huge agenda that became the subject of political control, and also from the political mechanism of society's integration.

The administrative apparatus is able to function only according to bureaucracy's intrinsic laws and operating principle, and to "respond to" and resolve by its operation the social tasks, tensions and needs. The administration of a command-directed economy, and the over-politicized management of society are an incredibly manpower-intensive integrating mechanism. The proliferation of administrative tasks, and the resulting rapid growth of administrative agencies and staffs are a world-wide phenomenon. In terms of growth rate, the socialist countries rank among the first in the world. Regrettably, in most cases the political leadership approached the administrative personnel's undesirable rapid growth from its formal, rather than substantive, aspect: with hiring freezes and cuts in personnel. At the same time, there was only a slight reduction in administrative tasks, with increases in some areas. As a result, the overburdening of the administrative apparatus has became chronic. And the bureaucracy is using task-avoidance mechanisms to protect itself from becoming overworked. It refuses to accept primarily the labor-intensive tasks, or performs them only perfunctorily, without any real solution.

Centralization, political overdetermination, excessive interference, and curtailed development of society's task-reducing self-organization are not the only factors causing the overburdening of the administrative apparatus. Its workload is being increased also by assigning to it tasks which are impossible for it to handle. I will cite

merely two examples of such tasks. First, when administrative organs of the state or party (mainly the state administration's central agencies entrusted with administering the economy) are directly assigned economy-organizing and management tasks. And second, when the administrative apparatuses themselves are expected to undertake scientific analyses and surveys. (Instead of helping to provide the scientific information on which the decisions are based, scientific organizations and experts are specifically excluded from participation.) In modernizing their administrative apparatuses, all the leading countries of the world have added scientifically trained experts to the two earlier groups in administration: the politicians, and professional administrators.

Hungary's administrative apparatus lacks experts with scientific training. And when added to the apparatus, they are soon assigned administrative tasks, because the apparatus is overburdened.

In any event, the two additional tasks (direct organization of the economy, and scientific analyses) further increase the workload of the overburdened administrative apparatus, forcing it to constantly expand and add more personnel. And the political leadership usually responds with indignant staff reductions, in an attempt to reduce the administrative apparatus and make its operation less bureaucratic.

8. Society's Chronic Overregulation

The tasks of redistribution, the "task-creating and -suctioning" effects of society's overcentralized organization, and too-detailed political intervention generate a huge demand for normative regulation. Thus the causes of overregulation can be found in the system-specific principles of society's organization.

Legal overregulation is a fact of life, a constant concern of our public opinion, and of the political governing bodies as well. There is no need to provide detailed proof of this fact's existence, in terms of either the number of regulations issued or the depth of regulation. Instead, it will be more worthwhile to note that—as in the case of the struggle against bureaucracy—the identification of the causes of legal overregulation ranges from the system-specific political organizing principles of society's management and integration, to a mania for regulating organizations, to bad legal conditioning, and to the bureaucracy's "task-creating" and "self-feeding" activity.

There are two relationships I must mention, without going into details. First, overregulation is an interminable consequence of the system-specific principles' operation, and a reduction in overregulation can be expected only if these principles are changed. Second, what we are faced with is not just legal overregulation: on the one

hand, legal overregulation is based on political overregulation; and on the other, it continues in the form of organizational norms (pseudostatutory regulations, internal norms, circulars, rescripts, rules, etc.).

9. Mixing of the Spheres of Authority

Organizational concentration was accompanied by the interlocking of state, party and voluntary public organizations, and by the mixing of their spheres of authority. This was achieved in part through the membership of individual leaders in several organizations simultaneously, the pluralism of their offices; and in part through all kind of power-concentrating committees and power-wielding organizations.

10. Institutionalization of a Power Hierarchy Based Primarily on Personal Subordination

In this political mechanism there developed a system of subordination to power and hierarchy that is based on personal subordination. The tasks and spheres of authority were not assigned according to the institutional order specified by law, or at least they departed from it considerably. This has made power relations entirely uncertain and unpredictable. Which in turn has forced the political mechanism's players: to constantly overinsure themselves; in the upper reaches of power, to undertake actions seeking informal stabilization; and to conform, surrendering entirely their independence.

11. A Peculiar Spoils System for Dividing and Redividing the Spheres of Authority

A peculiar "spoils system" developed for dividing the spheres of authority. Which meant not that the power and decisionmaking authority of each person and organization were what the statutory regulations and the organization's rules specified, but that everyone had as much decisionmaking authority as he could grab, without his power and influence encountering the resistance of others. Often a person or organization had a much larger sphere of authority than what he or it was entitled to by statute, but then again this actual sphere of authority was often smaller. This further increased the power mechanism's unpredictability and uncertainty, which led to an immense increase of organizational conformity.

12. Allowance of Contrasting Interests, Ideocratically Limited Rationality

In societies basically determined by their economic spheres and maintaining multiparty systems, the state's representative bodies and administrative organs were the arena of the political parties' activity. In addition to the state's representative bodies, also sociopolitical organizations—the political parties, trade unions, various interest-representing associations, lobbies, and pressure groups—played an effective role in representing and mediating interests between society at large and the

highest organs of state power. This representation mechanism automatically ensured a role of outstanding importance for the representative bodies, even if the debates on the principles of exercising power, and personnel appointments, were decided not openly before the representative bodies, but within the framework of agreements or compromises among the parties.

Under the party-centric political system, where at the center of power we find not state organs but a communist party embodying the leading force of society and possessing a coherent ideology, the arena of representation has shifted in part to the party organizations, and in part to the decision-preparing organizations of state administration. Today the representation of interests takes place primarily in the party's decision-preparing apparatus, rather than in the party committees, and in the decision-preparing apparatus of state administration. That is where the various interests, and claims for their assertion, surface and are allowed to clash.

The extremely close working relationship between the party apparatus and the decision-preparing organs of state administration, and the detailed day-to-day control exercised by the party, have developed into what is essentially a single decisionmaking mechanism, although formally it appears to be divided. This "telescoping" of the party and state decision-preparing and decisionmaking organizations, the exceptionally close link between them, rules out the possibility of distinct politics and advocacy of decision alternatives. The preparation of the decisions, and the "allowance" of contrasting interests by taking them into consideration (but not their representation) take place within the framework of the state and party apparatuses' activity. This interlocking party and state system of preparing and making decisions is a highly centralized system and it, like any organizing system, has a selectively open mechanism. As a result of the high degree of centralization, the "distance" between the decisionmakers and the place where the need for the decisions arises, respectively the persons or organizations whom the decisions affect, is too great. And as a result of this selective openness, only those interests, requirements and claims are "allowed" or taken into consideration that filter through the decision-preparing apparatuses' screen. There is a significant difference between the "selective allowance of interests" over which the bodies fail to exercise adequate political control, on the one hand, and society's real interest relations, on the other.

Not only has the party-centric political system's arena of representation shifted as compared with that of the state-centric political system, but also the nature and content of representation have changed. The nature of representation has changed basically because the party apparatus, as a kind of overinsurance, breaks down in such great detail the comprehensive social-policy objectives which the party's governing bodies have approved, and it uses its influence to assert and support the breakdown also at the state administrative organs in the

process of preparing the decisions. Consequently, any representation of interests and views from below is regarded as a disturbing factor and element, in relation to the detailed and predominant political guidance. Despite all its intentions to the contrary, this political practice has built into the mechanism for the assertion and representation of interests and views such a broad representation-inhibiting mechanism that it prevents the representation of alternatives from below, the surfacing of any criticism directed against central decisions, and the horizontal clashing of contrasting interests in the local social environment. But there is segmentation of interests also in socialist society, and the various interest aspirations manifest themselves in it with elemental force even if the representation mechanism is unable to handle and mediate them effectively in the political decisionmaking mechanisms. Therefore mechanisms for the assertion of interests do not develop in the formalized sphere, and the different interest aspirations precipitate and appear directly in and around the decisionmaking, rather than the representative, organs and positions. How interests interact in the nonformalized sphere is barred to public view, which includes also the openness of the party's and state's representative bodies. Consequently, society is unable to subject these interests to effective public oversight.

It is another peculiarity of the representation of interests that although the party's role naturally includes representation, as well as integration of the unified political will from contrasting views after they have been allowed to clash, basically the party is able to channel and bring to the surface only certain types of differences of interest or opinion. Every political organization, hence also the power-wielding party apparatus, incorporates the interest aspirations and contrasting views in a selective manner. This selection mechanism flatly refuses to record and transmit many innovative views and interest aspirations that indicate real tensions, would basically influence and improve the content of the decisions about to be adopted, and would provide relative broad social support for the adopted decisions based on wider interests.

Effective representation of interests is nothing other than the effective influencing of decisions. In society's political system, the representation of interests projects and follows the real power hierarchy. Due to the fact that the influencing of decisions, the representation or assertion of interests, takes its cue from the hierarchy of power, the mechanism of exercising power is detached from the organizations formally established for the representation of interests. Not the organizations and forms developed for the representation of interests determine society's real representation mechanism and processes. Rather, the developed and empirically proven, effective mechanisms for the representation of interests determine the processes, channels and content of representation.

Changes, New Elements in Representation

Since 1956, we have made considerable progress in making democratic our political system, representation of interests, and exercise of power. Today the party and state apparatuses are more sensitive in perceiving and incorporating the interest-representing movements within society. We now have in place new organizational and legal safeguards to make the exercise of power more democratic, and the mechanism for society's management has become more flexible. We have decentralized decisions, autonomous movements have developed within society, and generally there are fewer instruments for administrative management.

On the basis of all this, our present political system and decisionmaking mechanism are more suitable for "allowing" or taking into consideration in the decisions the interests and differences of opinion existing within society. Although we have already taken steps on behalf of making the representation of interests institutional and open (recognition in principle of the trade unions' interest-representing role, establishment of the Chamber of Commerce as the organization for articulating the enterprise interests, creation of the federations of agricultural cooperatives, etc.), our political system today still remains largely unsuitable for plugging the differences of interest and opinion into the decisionmaking system, openly and institutionally, through the representative bodies. To develop them further and make their decision-influencing role more complete is one of the key issues of our political system's democratization. The independent social movements introduced during the past 15 years in individual areas (e.g., in the economy, culture, science, etc.) further underscore the institutionalized representation of interests. These areas cannot be influenced and integrated by using the old instruments of direct, detailed, day-to-day management. And unless the interests are integrated on the basis of first allowing them to clash, the signs of anarchy will spread, and the disruptive role of the segmentation of interests will grow. The representation of divergent interests and views, their integration after allowing them to clash openly, their institutionalization and channeling into organizational forms—all this cannot be accomplished without first rethinking our entire system of political organizations.

Under the one-party system, the social differences that are becoming institutionalized are necessarily oriented toward the decisionmaking party apparatuses. But the party alone must not and cannot assume this political integrating role. The entire political system must undertake and achieve the integration of interests and views. This includes the trade unions, the organizations of the social strata, common-interest associations, local governments, autonomous and nonformalized voluntary collectives of citizens, etc. They constitute the first level that has to articulate the interests, let them clash, and

then integrate them. But this presupposes that we make the mentioned organizations truly able to articulate the divergent interests and views.

In a certain sense, the forging of national unity requires recasting the interest-representing organizations and movements within the political system.

13. Political System's Slow Innovation Retards Its Renewal in the Processes of Social Reproduction

Socialism was devised for the model of a society developing at the most rapid rate and capable of undergoing continual renewal. By contrast, however, limited and slow innovation is typical of the broadly interpreted (material, intellectual, institutional and normative) reproduction processes.

Renewal, successful adaptation, and the growth of society's ability to learn and apply its knowledge have slowed down not only in the economy and education, but mostly in the political sphere that determines the processes of society's innovation. Every social subsystem has its instruments and techniques with which to accelerate its own innovation processes. But the least innovative social subsystem under socialism comprises the political system, and ideology that determines the content of exercising political power. The slow innovation in two fundamental elements of socialism, which the political system integrates and ideocratically determines, is retarding the innovation processes within society's other subsystems (the economy, education, health care, structure of settlements, etc.) as well.

Socialism's political system has certain general effects which in part are deliberately built-in and maintained, and in part are consequential; and they significantly limit, rather than enhance, the political system's renewal, and thereby the renewal of the other subsystems as well. These general effects stem ultimately from political power's attitude that it "can afford not to learn," because it regards the result important, and not the cost at which it was achieved. The result achieved at any cost can blind the organization, the political leadership, and even the entire political system: they become sort of insensitive to the great problems of the present and the future.

In this case mainly the political system's "past keeps pushing it ahead," and its internal inertia becomes extremely high. In such circumstances the learning process of political power and of the political will can easily become abnormal, in the sense that in the learning process of individuals or organizations there prevail mechanisms which will cause the organization's learning ability to decline, rather than improve, in future. What usually lies behind such abnormal learning is that the system: overemphasizes the past at the expense of the present and future; overrates its immediate environment

at the expense of the universal environment; and overestimates the present prospects, while underestimating the possibility of surprises and changes.

Regarding the factors that reduce social reproduction's learning ability: What concerns us, our society and present reality is that overcentralization of the decision-making processes in our country is slowing not only them down, but the learning and innovation processes as well. Excessive organizational concentration likewise detracts from the ability to learn and to innovate. Beyond a certain point, social reproduction's redistributive mechanism also hampers these abilities. And as a consequence, so to speak, of the mentioned factors, incentive is lacking to proceed further with innovation, respectively to undertake and solve the conflicts accompanying innovation. The absence of institutions able to tolerate and handle conflicts is also a serious obstacle to the development of learning ability. Further sources of significant problems are: failure to clearly define the spheres of authority; and the peculiar spoils system for dividing the spheres of authority, under which the power and authority of a person or organization are not what the statutory regulations or the organization's rules specify, but as much as he or it can grab in the power struggles. As a result, persons in certain positions wield far wider and greater power than their formalized sphere of authority, while others wield much less power than what the formalized regulations and rules provide. Furthermore, the spheres of authority and power relations are in constant flux in the organizations, in conjunction with the turnover in personnel and the replacement of chiefs.

The constantly changing spheres of authority and power relations impose a very strict "obligation" to conform on the personnel of the organizations. Due to the intensified pressure to conform, the requirements of stability, continuity and constant professionalism suffer whenever a new chief replaces an old one. The organization, we might say, loses its "collective memory." With every change of chiefs there is a reorganization, a kind of relearning process begins, and in the end it will be entirely up to the new chief to determine how much of the organization's collective professional knowledge he and the organization will continue to use, and what is to be regarded as unimportant.

A consequence of the described causes is that also a very serious innovation-inhibiting mental factor develops by virtue of the institutionalized mechanisms. The objectified system of institutions, organizational mechanism and power alignment favor the spreading and influence of certain personality-structure elements, of certain traits, skills and mental abilities, while all the others are rejected outright. For example, one type of system of institutions favors the acceptance of conflicts, firm adherence to one's own views and willingness to defend them, high standards of debate, the lining up of arguments, etc.; but another type does not. Therefore certain types of personality traits and abilities spread and exert

influence very easily, practically without resistance, in a given organization or society; while other types of personal traits and abilities, primarily the ones associated with or required for reformist or innovative behavior, lie dormant. It must be emphasized that they are merely dormant. For the point is that society's ability to innovate does not cease when the social system is not sufficiently innovation-oriented. Another social structure, a more strongly innovation-oriented organizational and power mechanism are able to harness the brainpower of the same individuals, organizations and collectives more effectively in the processes of social reproduction, and thereby to improve society's ability to learn and respond.

Under socialism, the factors that hamper the political system's innovation the most are as follows:

a. The ideological image and explanation of society results in that every new element, process, institution and solution appears to be criticism of the ideology, a correction of the ideological tenets in force up to then. And since, in the ideocratic image of society, every partial solution (for example, the vertical organization of the trade unions, the unified youth organization, the perquisites of the party's power, the drafting of legislation, etc.) is identified with the whole, the political and ideological leadership perceives any criticism of the partial elements, and any attempt to reform them, as an attack against the whole. Criticism of the ideology cannot be undertaken openly, and therefore debates are not direct either, but assume the form of subdebates and subdialogues at the level of "false consciousness."

b. The concentration of power has reduced the number of autonomous decisonmaking bodies and institutions that respond to challenges and answer them. The system operates essentially on a single principle and on the basis of a single logic. It is possible to incorporate new professional elements and rationalities only by expressing them in the terminology of the old ideology, or by "tricking" the latter.

c. Multiprincipled systems are always more adaptive than systems operating on a single principle or a reduced number of principles. Political and ideological overdetermination has made socialism's political system one that operates on few and limited principles.

d. The slowdown caused in the decisionmaking processes by the centralization of the spheres of authority, and by the principles of centralization, has an extremely strong innovation-inhibiting effect. The institutionalized incompetence of the decisionmaking positions and bodies also has an innovation-retarding effect.

e. The fact that the sources of information have been reduced to a few and are monopolized, combined with the lack of alternative sources of information, strongly limits the making of correct decisions that represent renewal.

f. The image of socialism that ideology depicts, and socialism's prospects are essentially a closed vision of the future. This vision of socialism's future extrapolates present-day socialism (or rather the ideological false consciousness of socialism) to the future, only on a higher level. What has to be realized is not something different, but what already exists, on a different level. This closes the future (with the ideological image of the present) and makes it impossible to outline a truly appealing future. And the future can be neither closed nor today's society on a higher level; it must be different. Future socialism has to be something else than past or present socialism, but with different indicators. A society that is "deprived of its future," and which thinks only within the frames of reference that ideology has set for today, loses its ability to come up with realistic alternatives, to invent and choose, and to renew itself in historical perspectives.

g. The institutionalized "loss of collective memory" is a consequence of the peculiar way appointees to top posts are chosen, and of the organizational structure. The organizations' "loss of collective memory" and the "let's start everything from scratch" complex prevent social consciousness in Lukacs's sense—the experiences and knowledge of the past stored in memory, and the knowledge and experience handed down from others orally—from playing an effective role in organizing and innovating reproduction, by using the components of social consciousness in a new situation and in a new way. Socialism's political system is unable to accept without ideological prejudice either old or new knowledge, solutions or responses as intellectual factors of innovation.

14. Allocation of Top Posts From Above. Political Reliability Overrated and Equated With Loyalty to the Appointing Persons

The allocation of positions of power, and the selection of appointees to them assume great importance in every centralized and hierarchic system. Several contradictions characterize socialism's centralized power structure and the mechanism of selecting appointees to top posts.

First contradiction: The centralized and concentrated power mechanism gives appointees to top posts enormous power. At the same time, the centralized system's power mechanism also limits considerably the decisions of the person exercising power, without any protection of his sphere of authority. The stronger or central power takes away authority, or intervenes in the making of decisions, as it pleases. In the areas kept clear of central intervention—what these areas are, and how successfully they are kept clear of central intervention, depends essentially on power maneuvering, and not on political principles—local (institutional, organizational or territorial) power, or rather the authority of the local leader wielding this power, is practically unlimited.

Second contradiction: Decisionmaking and power-wielding posts in the centralized power structure are completely outside the control of society and the environment, of the democratic structures and institutions. On the other hand, the central or higher centers of power closely control and supervise these posts. The "power of subordinates" in areas outside the supervision of these centers of power, or which is geared to the balance of the power of individuals or groups at the next higher center of power, is practically unlimited.

Third contradiction: Due to the absence of public criticism and of oversight by society, even the system itself is unable to get rid of appointees in top posts on whom undeserved praise has been heaped over time. It often takes years to find a "pretext" to transfer them to other areas, usually on the basis of an "upgrading" evaluation of their performance. These evaluations and "transfers in the party's interest" then become a lifelong chain of merits, preventing those who make the appointments from getting rid of a mass of unsuitable cadres. The rescuing of such cadres by transferring them to ever newer (and often higher) positions bars the healthy selection of appointees to top posts, competition for such posts, and also renewal, in more and more areas.

Fourth contradiction: Political reliability has become absolute and predominant. Yet the politically "truly reliable" people and appointees to top posts are the system's main burden. They are mostly aggressive dogmatists, resolute denunciators and troublemakers, semieducated persons who have completed all sorts of seminars and have the certificates to prove it.

Fifth contradiction: Socialism's political system wanted to achieve the most effective selection of appointees to top post, and the best use of talents. Contrary to its intentions, however, it has narrowed incredibly the channels through which one gains appointment to a top post (and especially the channels through which one becomes a political leader). The members of society either do not know these channels, or they are barred access to the organizational "elevators" of leadership mobility.

The allocation of top posts from above means that the politician in the highest position of power decides either directly (he selects the appointee and makes the decision) or indirectly (he approves the proposed appointment) how several hundred positions of power are filled, without having to account to anyone for his decisions. In a power structure with a centralized mechanism, this license to select and decide is the strongest instrument of power.

The party's general secretary has direct or indirect authority: to appoint his deputy, the members of the Politburo, the Central Committee's secretaries and department heads, the first secretaries of the megye party committees, the prime minister and the members of his cabinet, the leaders of the SZOT, and the first secretary of the KISZ; to fill the more important military, diplomatic, economic and cultural posts; to select the officials of the National Assembly, the leaders of the PPF, etc. Society and the party membership have no pressure-exerting role in the selection of the appointees and in the reallocation of the positions of power; they may neither review the qualifications of the appointees nor criticize them or the decision of the person making the appointments.

The leaders appointed by the first leader have essentially similar authority to select cadres and make appointments within their own narrower bailiwicks. Compare, for example, the number of top posts the first secretary of a megye party committee has direct or indirect authority to fill!

The ridiculous and sad epilogue to gaining elective office is the hasty convening of the electing bodies (often three or four times) to take a perfunctory vote.

On the basis of a centralized and hierarchic chain of personal subordination (to the person making the appointment), this pervasive system of selecting appointees and making appointments to top posts corrals all such posts in the party, government, economy, cultural life, etc., and has only one selection criterion.

The internal selectivity of this system, its unpredictable operation, and the ease with which it can be influenced are the main causes of the political system's inertia and are perpetuating it.

Naturally, the career paths of persons in important national posts vary considerably, but the principles outlined above determine the selection of appointees to approximately between 20,000 and 25,000 top posts.

The mechanisms by which one becomes a leader, and the laws governing organizations and mobility can be "learned"; the institutionalized requirements and expectations can be socialized. This "knowledge of how to be successfully mobile" can then be used to good effect to advance one's career. The "system" can be tricked fairly easily, and beyond a certain level the danger of being purged practically ceases. Social groups and strata have no role in selecting our political leaders, judging their qualifications or evaluating their performance. They are unable to place in positions of power leaders whom they consider to be be progressive and qualified, or to confirm and keep such leaders in power when they become embroiled in political conflicts. Nor are the social groups and strata able to rid themselves of leaders who obviously are unsuitable.

Society tolerates its leaders but does not select them. The institutionalized system of selecting leaders under socialism narrows the pool from which leaders can be drawn and postpones their timely rotation. Due to the absence

of competition for leadership positions, and to society's inability to express its will by electing its leaders, the system favors the selection of persons who conform to the situation.

II. Sociological Character of the MSZMP as a Bolshevik-Type Communist Party

The key to understanding socialist society is knowledge of its political system. One can gain this knowledge by exploring the party's sociological character.

Communist parties of the bolshevik type are the great invention and hope, but also the great tragedy of modern political systems even today, especially in Central and Eastern Europe. They are an historical formation that determines the society, history and lives of generations, of millions of people. The bolshevik-type communist party is merely one historical type of communist party. Even in the past there have been communist parties differing in their character from the bolshevik-type party, and today the Eurocommunist parties are becoming more and more definitely and markedly distinct from communist parties of the bolshevik type. In the course of their historical development, the small and outlawed "closely organized" or bolshevik-type parties have been transformed into mass parties that are in power. Despite the historical changes, certain characteristic features have become permanently established, and the minor changes have not altered the ruling parties' basic character. The fundamental changes in the character of one or another of the communist parties lasted only a short time.

Thus the bolshevik-type communist parties are merely one group, although indisputably the dominant group, of communist parties. These parties are historical formations which in many respects, due to their specific characteristic traits in the countries where they are in power, can no longer be regarded as political parties in the strict sense of the word. In terms of their function, organizational structure, operating mechanism, position of power and influence, they differ so much from all the other political parties that it is questionable whether they may be called at all a party in the sociological sense.

The possibility cannot be excluded that in party-centric socialist societies also communist parties of a different sociological character might develop, in addition to the bolshevik-type communist parties and the Eurocommunist parties.

Communist parties of the bolshevik type are complex political and sociological formations. They are political institutions whose aggregate of components comprises their organizational structure, ideology, particular political ethos and values, political culture, organizing principle, special system of recruiting, mode of operation, tolerated and expected patterns of behavior, objectified statuses and set of norms.

The historically evolved characteristic features of the bolshevik-type communist parties can be perceived through these components.

As one of the bolshevik-type communist parties, the MSZMP bears historical responsibility before the nation for everything that happened in Hungary during the past four decades, as well as for everything that is happening now and will happen in future. Its exclusive accountability follows from the exclusiveness of its power.

The party and its leaders bear unescapable historical responsibility for the following questions: Are they willing and able to uncover and disclose the present situation, including their own situation and characteristic features? Are they able to correctly formulate and answer history's questions of vital importance? And will they or will they not find their suitable place, role and functions in a reform movement leading toward the creation of democratic socialism?

The key question of a democratic reform movement is its link with the party. The party can be the political organizer of the democratic reform movement, and it can also obstruct it. If the party is to become the political organizer of the democratic reform movement and of creating democratic socialism, then it must radically change. Only a communist party that transforms and reforms itself on the basis of democratic principles can be the democratic reform movement's leader.

Unless the party undergoes democratic reform, the reform movement and socialism's renewal will take place without the party and in spite of it. Reform thinking, action and politics in this case will necessarily form a new political center outside the party, among a splinter party membership, in an environment of party members turning away from the party's leaders and apparatus. In this case a sharp social conflict, perhaps even a tragic break, will develop between institutionalized party power and society, projecting the alternative of either a dictatorship of the apparatus, or the historical unfolding of a democratic reform movement that will be victorious in spite of the party. In either case, the party would lose the historical justification of its existence. In the first case, as a dictatorial institution rejected by society. And in the second case, as something that history has made obsolete, because the party proved itself incapable of undergoing democratic renewal. Not the state, but the bolshevik-type communist party that is incapable of democratic renewal will find itself in the museum, along with the stone ax and the spinning wheel. Society and history will pass judgment on the party. In the long run, neither the party nor the state can become an institution acting in society's stead, above it and in its name, or even against its will. The party must find its place, role and adequate functional scope within society, rather than above it.

To outline the desirable characteristics and reform requirements of a democratically reformed communist party that is qualified to act as the political organizer of a democratic reform movement, we must first clearly understand the party's sociological character, as the characteristic features of the historical formation that determines institutionalized political power as a whole.

Sociological Characteristics of Bolshevik-Type Communist Parties

The party's sociological character evolved in specific historical and political situations. The Russian Social Democratic (Bolshevik) Party emerged amidst the oriental state despotism in Russia that had practically no democratic traditions or institutions. The circumstances of underground existence compelled certain recruiting, operating and organizational solutions.

Strict observation of the rules of conspiracy, a high degree of centralization, party discipline and responsibility of the military type, and also the peculiar political ethos and culture that developed on the basis of all this, the political socialization, the emphasis on direct political action, etc. were essential conditions for the party's operation. The Russian Socialist Revolution created a favorable political situation to enable a small but extremely well organized, conscious and disciplined minority party, imbued with a high sense of its historical mission, to seize power and begin the country's socialist transformation, in spite of Marxism's original theory and ideology. The prospects of survival, of the victory of socialism in one country, improved after the initial uncertainties, respectively that victory was achieved at the cost of fierce battles and through the effective use of the tools of dictatorship. The revolution and political organization that won in spite of the theory, later became the only feasible model of socialist transformation. The Bolshevik Party was simultaneously obsessed by a sense of success, by the notion of being the only feasible road (even the slightest departure from which would jeopardize the success), and by paranoid fear of a unified and hostile international imperialism. Under the influence of these obsessions, for "all national detachments of communism" the only feasible road holding promise of victory became the Soviet model of building and organizing the party and society, on the command of "once more, the same way."

Practice created the party-centric political system. Instead of Marx's unity of power to be achieved in representative bodies of government democratically elected from below, and functioning under the public's constant scrutiny, an immense concentration of power was realized in the party apparatus, respectively in an institutionalized system of interlocking top party, state and military organizations and posts.

The objectified paranoid fear of a split within the party, which the party members socialized (internalized), and which served as the apologetics for the preservation of Stalin's personal power, fundamentally determined the character of the bolshevik-type communist party. The mythicized party unity meant essentially the uncritical acceptance and enforcement of a single leader's will. The ending of political factions, platforms, and free and open debate within the party, in the name of this mythicized party unity, merely became the ideology for ruthlessly settling scores with political opponents.

To these, essentially Russian and Soviet, peculiarities determining the party's character there was added in the course of practice a twofold distortion of Marx's conception of socialism and communism. The gist of the first distortion was that the political conclusions and ideological conceptions drawn from a scientific analysis of the most advanced capitalist societies in Western Europe became reality in political practice under the conditions of oriental state despotism. The ideology and theory were transplanted to an inadequate social environment and manifested themselves in political practice. The other distortion occurred when the socialist countries of Central and Eastern Europe were forced to mechanically copy, in an inadequate social and historical environment, the "model of socialism" that became distorted due to the "brutal theoretical and practical political manipulation" in Stalin's time. Although varying in their degrees of development, the "Westerly" structures and network of "small circles of democracy and freedom" in these countries made them suitable in principle to adopt the ideology and society-organizing political objectives of Marx's original socialism, politically they would have needed a longer transitional period. Instead, the communist leaders returning home copied mechanically the dictatorial (Soviet oriental) model of socialism that became distorted by the practice and politics of Stalin's time.

Under such circumstances and in this historical situation, also the leaders of the Hungarian Communist Party waged a ruthless and constant historical struggle against society (in the same way as this was being done in the other socialist countries). Against the very society which, they claimed, was lined up behind the party in full agreement with them, but against which they simultaneously harbored also deep suspicion. Even the slightest resistance to the mechanical copying of the Soviet model with its alien structures, institutions and political practice, proved to them that socialism could win in Hungary only through ruthless historical struggle. The voluntaristic nature and content of politics became absolute, creating and institutionalizing the necessary interlocking party and state apparatus. This peculiarly interpreted task left its imprint on the party's sociological character, reinforcing and making permanent the organizational and operating features that this perception of the situation required. The "peaceful techniques," institutions and processes of democratic change were unable to evolve.

The "new [Machiavellian] prince" of our time must transform itself from the "militant" party that has come

to dominate society, into a party that is subordinate to society and operates on democratic principles.

1. A feature that distinguishes the bolshevik-type communist parties from all other nonelite parties is that the party is the vanguard, and not merely an aggregate of like-minded people subscribing to the same ideology. By formulating itself as the vanguard and the upholder of the only scientific political world outlook, a communist party of the bolshevik type places itself above the common man, the class, and society. The formulated vanguard thesis makes the bolshevik-type communist party a special elite party. The party's elite nature stems from its being the ideological elite party, and not from the special privileges its members enjoy by virtue of their wealth, education, birth or office (as in the case of parliamentary, cultural, class or professional elite parties). The party's particular ideology, and its belief that it alone possesses the only scientific, correct world outlook impart a special character to the party. The formulated vanguard thesis gives the party's members a sense of superiority that is typical of elite parties, and it also makes them feel intellectually superior. This self-image of ideological vanguard and elite party, or positive autostereotypy, imbues the party membership, and the party's leaders in particular, even when the other members of society and other parties recognize the communist party neither as the vanguard nor as the privileged ideological elite party (negative heterostereotypy). The bolshevik party's self-awareness does not expect society or anyone else to confirm and legitimize the party as the vanguard and the ideological elite party. Once the party has gained power, the vanguard thesis becomes irrefutable and carries its own verification, at least in the eyes of the supporters of this thesis. Any increase in the number of persons who doubt that the party is the vanguard, and who question its being the privileged and exclusive ideological elite party, has just the opposite effect: it reinforces a minority's formulated self-image, its belief that it alone maintains the only correct and true ideology, and scientific political world outlook.

In other words, outside criticism and the questioning of the party's vanguard status will not in themselves diminish the bolshevik party's self-awareness or undermine its belief in its formulated vanguard and elite-party role.

2. The bolshevik-type communist parties' self-image of vanguard and ideological elite party is based essentially on three claims to being exclusive:

a) Only the bolshevik-type communist parties have a truly scientific and adequate ideology;

b) They alone possess the only truly scientific and correct philosophy of society, man and nature. Possession of this scientific world outlook means that, in both theory and practice, the system of interpretation principles laid down in the party's ideology and philosophy becomes the sole yardstick and criterion of scientific truth;

c) Exclusive possession of the only correct ideology and scientific world outlook makes the bolshevik-type communist party the only political organization truly qualified to hold and exercise power. Any political alliance, coalition or consensus with another party or organization pursuing different policies or professing a different ideology is merely a temporary concession made of necessity and must eventually lead to the exclusive, monopolistic and immutable possession of power.

The exclusive upholder and definer of the only correct political ideology and only scientifically exact world outlook, applying them to real situations with concrete explanations, is the party leadership of the day; it alone is qualified to hold exclusive political power, and therefore its power is unquestionable. Given this threefold claim to exclusiveness, the "Doctrine" necessarily rigidifies into a system of dogmas, but these the political leaders of the day "interpret flexibly" in the course of the "real situation's concrete analysis."

3. Before gaining exclusive power, all bolshevik-type communist parties were well-organized minority parties. The strictly hierarchic, closely organized and self-assured parties undertook their historical messianic mission against the majority (even an overwhelming one). The ideological elite party's sense of superiority, the undertaking of its messianic mission and vocation against the majority, and even against its own class base if necessary, not only did not diminish its theoretical and political self-assurance, but even lent every party member the pathos of historical heroism for the majority waiting to be enlightened. After all, the majority's resistance was only a matter of numbers and time; because, according to the ideological premises, sooner or later everyone must necessarily arrive at the only adequate ideology and scientific world outlook. The whole thing hinged merely on correctly choosing and targeting the propaganda, retraining and enlightment. Anyone who still failed to come around to accepting the only correct ideology was partially inferior and dim, and partially could be limited in his activity.

4. Lenin advanced the thesis that the working class, through its own spontaneous political self-organization, would never be able to attain the scientific political world outlook that the vanguard upholds, and therefore the adequate political consciousness of the working class has to be brought to it from without, by the party acting as the vanguard. The political organization "for itself" of the working class "in itself" can occur only through the party. Once power has been attained, this becomes the permanent task of agitation and propaganda, among the younger generations, the working class (always more backward than the vanguard) and society. This thesis of the vanguard's intellectual and ideological superiority establishes from the outset a hierarchic relationship between the party and the working class, the party and other parties, the party and the other political movements (for example, the trade union can serve only as the party's prep school, and the youth organization likewise), and between the party and society.

In the course of agitation and propaganda among the masses, this "adequate political" consciousness, which the vanguard is qualified to bring to the working class and society from without, eventually became the sum total of philosophical principles, ideological dogmas and timely policy interpretations.

The only true and correct views, theses and interpretation principles become eternal and immutable truths once they have been proclaimed. Whatever the party recognizes as mutable, open or partially true in its theory and ideology can only be ephemeral, but there are no concessions on major issues. If we consider the assertion and institutionalization of the party's claims to the exclusiveness of its ideology, scientific world outlook and political power, then the recognition of Marxism-Leninism as an open and partially true theory is nothing more than a flower of speech.

5. The ideology and political practice of bolshevik-type political parties contain a sort of implied, sometimes even explicitly stated, self-image of omnipotence and omnicompetence. This self-image of omnipotence and omnicompetence, combined with a political role consciously undertaken as "historical service," follows from the preceding characteristic features and from political voluntarism. The exclusion of all other political wills from political life had enhanced and ensured that the political will "became excessive," and that the firm belief in the party's omnipotence and omnicompetence became established. Only counterbalancing political wills of different content are able to constrain individual political wills and define their adequate scopes and competence. Once the counterbalancing political wills cease, it is inevitable that the political will holding exclusive power "becomes excessive," functions far beyond its adequate scope of operation and influence, repoliticizes society's individual subsystems, "undertakes" and resolves every social conflict and task. "The more fulfilled the political intellect, the more strongly it believes in the omnipotence of the will" (Marx). Even if the political will that fosters a self-image of omnipotence and omnicompetence modestly perceives its mission as "historical service," by undertaking absolute and exclusive historical responsibility it reaches a state in which accountability is completely absent. It can be accountable only to itself, because there is nobody else to be accountable to.

6. Assertion of the organizational and operating principle that is known as democratic centralism is one of the main distinguishing features of the bolshevik-type communist parties. As another important proof of their being "different," the Eurocommunist parties have abandoned also this principle.

If broken down into its components, Lenin's principle of democratic centralism shows that in the final outcome the constituent elements are not of equal value, and that the democratic rights are not able to counterbalance the primary effects of centralization. According to the

MSZMP rules now in force, democratic centralism is an organizational and operating principle that prevents the surfacing of the contrasting interests, views, standpoints and proposed solutions that exist and are being continually reproduced within the party; their articulation as planks of political platforms; the maintenance and defense of minority opinions; the formulation of current criticism of decisions once they have been adopted; the offering of alternatives; the judging of the qualifications of candidates for leadership posts and seats on the party committees; the running of opposing candidates; the making of timely personnel changes; the continuation of debates in public; the preservation of the plurality of interests and views; and the forming of political consensuses that create unity out of diversity.

In sum, the principle of democratic centralism proved sound in a given historical and social situation (underground, and in the first period after seizing power), but by now it has become an obsolete and anachronistic principle and practice of organization and operation. Not only has the historical need for it ceased, but in the course of the monopolistic and dictatorial exercise of power it has changed into bureaucratic centralism in practical politics, transforming itself into a system of institutions that ensures the power of the centralized party bureaucracy.

The democratic centralism that lost its historical and political necessity and turned into bureaucratic centralism has become the main obstacle to the strengthening and institutionalization of democracy within the party, and to the party's renewal.

A slowdown of the corrective processes, seemingly immutable internal incompetence, and a split between the party leadership and membership have become typical of the party's intramural life and operation. A rift now exists among the party leaders in charge of day-to-day matters, the party apparatus, the party's collective governing bodies, and the party membership. The rift or rifts are causing tensions, and smoldering but intensifying conflicts within the party. A substantial proportion of the party membership has lost its faith and trust in the party apparatus and party leadership. The party's own membership regards and treats the party's governing bodies and apparatus as a structure and institutions that in many respects are unable to make decisions, are alien, opposed to the membership, and act without the membership's consent and against its will. The party apparatus is divided in its political views, and in its analysis and assessment of the situation. The types of political personalities within the party range from members of the apparatus whose views often differ from those of the governing bodies and the party leaders in charge of day-to-day affairs, and who have come out in support of the party's renewal in a democratic reform movement; to persons holding dogmatic views and accusing the party's present leaders of dogmatism.

The gulfs and rifts within the party are generating latent tensions, uncertainty, mutual prejudices and fears between the party leaders and the professional party workers holding different views. A significant proportion of the party membership (and of the public) is unaware of this political segmentation within the party, and is unable to find its bearings in the maze of relations resulting from this segmentation. Without any points of reference, and unable to influence in the least the composition of the party's governing bodies and the appointments to leadership posts, the party membership has become impassive, has lost its hope and faith in the party's ability to renew itself and to properly fulfill its formulated and proclaimed historical mission and role.

The party's organizational and operating mechanism is unable to renew itself without democratic renewal, without abandoning the democratic centralism that has become distorted into bureaucratic centralism.

7. Wherever they seized power, the bolshevik-type political parties became organizations for the concentration of power, interlocking the top posts in the party, the trade unions, the representative bodies of government, the state apparatus, and the military and defense organizations.

According to Marx's conception, the supreme representative body of the "Commune-type state," which rejected the principle and institutions of the separation of powers, was to embody the unity of power. In the socialist countries there is unified, nonseparated, and monopolistic power, a strong concentration of power, but in the party's governing bodies and apparatus, and not in the state machinery.

The party exclusively wielding concentrated political power does not have as a matter of course any role to control, influence or limit power. These party functions exist only under multiparty systems, in part in relation to the other parties, and in part in relation to the state machinery.

The concentration of power has made the political system monocentric, and not even the political bureaucracy's immutably existing latent plurality alters this fact.

Abolition of the separation of powers into branches of government, whose functioning is integrated yet mutually constraining and controlling, ended all horizontal power relations, organizational and political autonomy, the integrated system of small circles of "freedoms and autonomies." The monocentric concentration of power has essentially changed the political system into a vertical chain of subordination to a single political principle, will and personal domination, into a hierarchically institutionalized system of subordination and superordination.

On the scale of entire society, the monocentric concentration of power has led to the emergence and historical institutionalization of an exclusive, monopolistic power bloc.

The most important instruments that ensure the concentration of power are as follows:

a) The vertical and horizontal centralization of the spheres of authority. Vertical centralization affects the organizations, decisionmaking levels and positions between which a relationship of subordination and superordination exists, and it comes about through the vertical concentration of decisionmaking authority in the higher organizations and positions. Due to the fact that decisionmaking authority usually is concentrated eight to ten or even more organizational and decisionmaking levels higher than where the effects of the decisions are felt, the "distance principle" applies and becomes permanent.

The essence of horizontal concentration is that decisionmaking authority is centralized not only through the vertical concentration of the spheres of authority within the party, but also the decisions concerning any of the vertically centralized social spheres and areas are in their turn concentrated in the central, megye and local party organizations. Thus the governing bodies of the party (Politburo, Secretariat, the commissions of the Central Committee, etc.) determine in advance the matters brought before the National Assembly for decision by that representative body. The central administrative decisions of the Council of Ministers and the individual ministries, the decisions before the SZOT and the governing bodies of the vertical trade unions, the decisions before the governing bodies of the PPF and KISZ, the drafts of statutory regulations (laws, law decrees, government decrees, etc.), the decisions affecting the spheres of health care, the development of settlements, education, the economy, culture and the arts—they all are likewise centralized in the party apparatus.

In principle, the party may decide any matter; and the state or other organizations incorporate the party's decisions, its "preliminary standpoints" that always mean decisions on the merits of the case, into their own formal decisions. Structurally, the vertical and horizontal centralization does not even take place within the framework of formal decisionmaking procedures and spheres of authority, but in the dimensions of informal volition and decisionmaking. Such well-known tools are employed here as preliminary "consultations," "summonings," ad hoc conferences, meetings, instructions issued by phone or face-to-face, etc.

b) The complete absence of any ban on infringements of authority. The party's megye, Budapest municipal or central apparatus may interfere in any matter of any social sphere (education, health care, the economy, culture or science). In addition to requesting information, the apparatus may state its viewpoint, designate its

candidate, issue instructions concerning the decision, limit the alternatives to be considered, and transform in advance the draft decision it considers desirable into the decisionmaker's will, in the form of the party's standpoint. By limiting the decision alternatives, selecting one of the alternatives, narrowing the content of the decisionmaker's will, and determining the nature and mode of the solution, the party organizations curtail authority and thereby further concentrate and centralize decisions in the already centralized decisionmaking system.

The organizations and bodies deprived of their decisionmaking authority and autonomy may not support their contrasting standpoints or voice their contrasting professional reasons and arguments. From here on their task is "to formulate into a state decision" the party standpoint handed down in advance and usually conveyed orally, in a memo, in the minutes of a meeting, or briefly noted on the margin of the documents. And the "party standpoint" handed down in advance then appears in the guise of the "organization's own decision," concealing the curtailment and infringement of authority, the party apparatus's preliminary decision on the merits of the case, and its interference that violates decisionmaking authority and autonomy.

c) Paranoid fear maintains and reproduces the concentration of power. Here I would mention first not so much the fear of the underlings, the managed, the staff members who cannot expect to be defended publicly and by the public. Nor the fear of subordinate organizations. But the managers, the apparatuses that constrain and infringe on authority by their interference, the governing bodies, and the leaders. The members and leaders of the local, institutional, megye or central party apparatus can be called to account anytime, and held responsible for anything in the area they control. The minister has to send Party Headquarters an explanatory report because of an interview on television or radio, some shortage item, an incident in a theater, a proposal at a university conference or a department chairman's proposal that is voted down, etc. From the party's self-image of omnipotence and omnicompetence, its "consciousness" of itself as being responsible for everything and qualified to solve it, there follows as a natural reflex the party's desire to know about everything, its "we have to solve it" obsession. This consciousness of the apparatus necessarily generates the "fear of the organization's decisionmaker" that he may be called to account for anything at any time whatever, of having to know of everything and to always be able to account for it. This ideology-rooted "self-image of an omnipotent apparatus," and "fear of the organization's leader" jointly create the peculiar organizational mentality typical of party leaders (megye party secretaries and leaders, party leaders at institutions, the staff and leaders of the apparatus at Party Headquarters) who always want to know of everything, immediately. The omnipotent apparatus's conviction and self-image go hand in hand with absolutized responsibility, with the complete lack of accountability and the defenselessness of a person who assumes responsibility

for everything. Absolute responsibility (at the public, organizational and personal levels simultaneously) leads to the cessation of responsibility, to the impossibility of holding anyone concretely accountable. This simultaneously makes the degree and content of responsibility relative, because absolute responsibility can assume concrete form anytime in anything. Under the system of absolutized and therefore relative responsibility, to hold anyone concretely accountable seems unjust: justice ceases to be the basis of concrete personal accountability.

Rather than provide self-confidence, responsibility for everything generates fear, at least in every normal person of sound mind, the privileges of great power notwithstanding. The only sensible and legal way to compensate for this fear and reduce it is to flee under the responsibility-obliterating protection of impersonal collective decisions, by institutionalizing the "organized absence of accountability." The organized absence of accountability is the consequence, rather than the cause, of the centralized organizational power structure. Other means of creating the organized absence of accountability are the shifting of responsibility to others and downward, and constant day-to-day interference in the decisions to be made. The localization, suppression and blocking of problems and responsibilities are also components of the organized absence of accountability. In exchange for the "protection" that the leader confers as a "favor," the subordinate organizations and their personnel tolerate the infringement of their authority, the interference in the decisions, and the termination of the autonomy to which the organization or position is entitled.

The paranoid fear stems from above, from the objective system of overcentralized power concentration. This fear is aroused or generated not by specific persons or leaders, but by the mechanism itself. Therefore, not even democratic-minded, loyal, understanding and ethically irreproachable leaders are able to dispel this fear. Anyone who overcomes this mechanism-generated "system-specific fear" either leaves the mechanism of power or has to undertake the conflicts with those who are full of this fear.

Despite appearances to the contrary, the fear and helplessness are always greater in the higher echelons.

The alienated structures and institutions of relativized and terminated accountability, which accompany the absolutization of responsibility, spread throughout entire society. The staffs and subordinates also develop their defense mechanisms against the objectified mechanism of system-induced fear. By "bucking" the decisions and shifting responsibility for the choice upward, thereby ensuring themselves against being held accountable later, they spare their own environment the possible conflicts that could arise from differences of opinion.

The paranoid fear has a system-stabilizing role at every level and in every area. Its effect is felt even when there is no real reason to justify the fear. In itself the very fact

that the fear's existence and effect are not doubted is enough to maintain its objectified and alienated structures, institutions, and forms in the collective consciousness. It is enough to internalize, by means of behavior conforming to the system and the mechanism, the fears, beliefs and elements of experience and knowledge that society harbors in its consciousness; and then to objectify them again, through suitable patterns of behavior. The processes of internalizing and objectifying this fear become society's actions, typical patterns of organizational behavior, and objective social relations.

The fear can be overcome only by breaking up these structures and institutions, which is an experience foreign to the system and often cathartic, but always leads to conflicts and perhaps even personal tragedies.

d) The absence of openness in politics creates conditions conducive to the concentration of power. The authority-infringing, power-concentrating, "suctioning," interfering, and autonomy-violating activity of a significant proportion of the real decisionmaking organizations, bodies, leaders and apparatus staff takes place entirely behind closed doors. During the past 25 years the party adopted, to no avail, about a dozen resolutions that called for ending the "unnecessary" duplications in the activities of the party and state organs, and for refraining from excessive and day-to-day interventions. But no significant change can be expected as long as authority can be infringed, and power further centralized, in the absence of openness in politics and without the danger of being called to account. And it is demonstrated repeatedly that not even the governing bodies are masters of the situation: despite their incredibly great privileges of power, they are unable to ensure the implementation of their own resolutions. They, too, are "dominated by the system," and are captives of their own mechanism.

8. A characteristic feature of the bolshevik-type communist parties is firm belief in their possessing a sort of charisma that is then personified, through transferal, in the party leader or leaders of the day.

Belief in the charismatic leader's special and remarkable traits applies within the bolshevik movement primarily to the party itself, rather than to any particular person. The party is the "most precious treasure" of the working class. Only the party is able and qualified to find its bearings amidst the complicated social, historical and political conditions, and to come up with the right solutions. Only the party is exclusively qualified to lead society. The party is the vanguard, the "embodied consciousness" of the working class. In differences with party members, the party is necessarily always right. Without the party there is no socialism, and communism cannot be attained. As a result of the above theses, the party detached itself from the concrete party members, rose above them, alienated itself from them in certain periods, and appeared as an entity separate from them. The sum total and embodiment of the socialist political movement's all positive traits thus became distinct from,

and independent of, its membership. Mysticized in this manner, the party leads a life of its own, primarily as the reference point in the course of making decisions. (The party's general secretary never says "I appoint or nominate so and so to be prime minister," but that the "party" appoints, nominates, etc.)

Even the party's concrete supporters are special people: they constitute the vanguard, and are not simply a voluntary organization of persons holding identical political views. They are the best-trained fighters, the most-conscious and most-enlightened upholders of the only correct scientific world outlook and political ideology. The levels and stages that raise the party above society, in a hierarchy, are as follows:

- The party member is somebody special compared to the common man,
- The party itself is the vanguard compared to the [working] class;
- The party as vanguard is qualitatively different from its concrete members, a higher-order entity;
- The party leadership is the vanguard's leading force;
- In the course of making decisions and exercizing power, however, even the party leadership refers to a higher-order quality [entity], distinct from itself.

These stacked distinguishing and hierarchizing levels raise the "party" above society, then above the membership, and finally above the leadership, vesting the party with the knowledge of the only truly scientific world outlook and political ideology that exclusively the party upholds.

The party thus towers above society, the membership and leadership, as the possessor of unique political, ideological and scientific skills and abilities, and the sole embodiment of remarkable properties (charisma). The acknowledgement, acceptance or questioning of the charisma of the party vested with charismatic properties is the basis in consciousness that provides the legitimation of the party's leading and guiding role.

The basis of the thesis regarding the party's organizational charisma is the same as in the case of personal charisma:

- Direct and indirect experience of the party's omnipotence, superhuman abilities and incredible successes;
- The source, instrument and guarantor of all successes is the party, and no other party or organization is able to match them;
- All achieved results are subsequently expropriated, and society's every achievement is attributed directly or indirectly to the party's activity;
- The thesis of the party's being an historical necessity and, once the party has been formed, the thesis of the party's interminability;
- The party's universality, which means that the same

power structures and formations as the socialist countries' bolshevik-type parties and their power structures will gradually emerge everywhere;

- The party's remarkableness is somewhat mystical and intangible: Everything in it (as an organization, a collective of persons) acts, appears and applies differently than in other or earlier political institutions (total separation and distinctness from everything else).

The charismatic party's power, once it has come to power, transforms itself into traditional rule. In contrast with traditional rulers who are mere mortals, however, the party's charisma is permanent. Of the party's perpetuated charisma, the institutional charisma passes to the leader of the day, or to the privileged stratum of leaders, who then personify the party's charisma. It is indisputable that in their respective lifetimes Lenin, Stalin, Rakosi, Mao, Tito and other party leaders severally possessed personal charisma derived from the party's charisma, but their personal charismas did not survive their death in each case. (For today's leaders as examples, see Castro, Kim Il-song, Ceasescu, Zhivkov, and Honecker.)

Passing on the organization's charisma has become institutionalized, and the mechanism itself ensures that it is passed on. As a result, even persons who are not charismatic the least bit (for example, Khrushchev, Brezhnev, Chernenko, Honecker, etc.), or are modest and shun the charismatic party leader's role, possess some measure of the party's derived charisma, respectively the mechanism's objective laws compel them to possess it. It is not so much they themselves who need this derived organizational charisma, rather the objectified mechanism does. It is an institutionalized and normative party duty to personify the party's charisma, even against personal inclinations to the contrary.

The hypothetical organizational (party) charisma, and the derived charisma that the leader possesses and personifies exist in themselves, due to the fact that such theses have been advanced. The soundness and truth of the theses may not be questioned regarding either charisma. Therefore, when there is sufficient dictatorial pressure, opportunity does not have to be sought to verify the actual existence of charisma and its ability to function. The party's charisma exists not because it has been verified, but because a thesis to that effect has been advanced. And the derived charisma's existence is due to the mandatory institution of passing on the charisma, rather than to the abilities of a specific person.

For party members the party-charisma thesis prescribes the obligation of loyalty, and often also loyalty tests. (For example, implementation of a decision is assigned to a party member who opposed the decision; support of resolutions with which the party members disagree is mandatory, although they did not help to draft the resolutions and were unable to influence the resolutions' content.)

The loyalty test is often combined with putting to test and reaffirming the party member's faith in the party's charisma. The innocent victims of the personality cult accepted and played their roles: they had to believe and accept the absurd, which was absurd because only the "party" saw all the interrelations that the party members, the victims, could not possibly see.

With the rewriting of historical events and interrelations, the party's charisma is founded also on history. Often the rewriting is made necessary by changes in the leaders vested with the party's derived charisma.

Anything is suitable to "verify" the charisma. Stalin, rather than the Soviet people, achieved victory in World War II. Later it turned out that others played the decisive role in achieving victory. Gero the Bridge Builder, and in the final outcome the party, rebuilt the bridges, rather than the Hungarian workers. The party points the way, recognizes the situation, takes the lead, fights, achieves, uncovers, reaps victories, is vigilant and stays on guard, whatever is involved. Be it the Civil War, World War, counterrevolution, nationalization of schools, land reform, recognition of the role of interests, or the scientific definition of ownership.

The transfer of all analytical ability, responsibility for decisions, guidance and perspicuity, from individual party members, members of the party apparatus and party leaders to the party itself, raises with elemental force the practiced and customary plea during social crises and in confusing situation: let the party say what has to be done, let it provide guidance. When the guidance is not forthcoming, the apparatus unaccustomed to acting on its own becomes entirely insecure.

Where the party is "raised" above the party members as an entity independent of them, and the party membership accepts and reaffirms with its loyalty the party's charisma, there favorable objective and subjective conditions are created for a certain "sense of messianic mission" to develop. This sense of messianic mission then manifests itself in suitable patterns of behavior which personify and objectify it. It lends the pathos of heroism and dedication, of willingness to make sacrifices, to the party's supporters. The histories of the bolshevik-type communist parties and movements offer countless examples of moral courage, unshakable faith, voluntary pledges, and heroically undertaken and fulfilled tasks. Regrettably, however, such heroic efforts have been undertaken also on behalf of wrong decisions, hopelessly flawed conceptions, and power mechanisms alienated from the interests and will of society's majority, causing a series of personal tragedies and inner conflicts. The destructive force of fanatical beliefs has been the source of immense tragedies also within the communist movement. Only the belief and conviction acquired through the freedom to doubt do not become a political force destructive to self and others, a devastating blind faith.

9. In their professed ideology the bolshevik-type communist parties accept universal and socialist moral values and norms. In their political practice over a long period of time, however, they have rid themselves of all moral constraints. Their political practice has long been governed by the principle that "the end justifies the means."

Bolshevism's real moral dilemma can be found in its attitude to democracy, and in the following related question: Is it possible to achieve good by bad means, freedom by means of repression, and a free society even against the majority's will? On the highest theoretical level, Gyorgy Lukacs discusses this dilemma, and its answer, in his writings ("Bolshevism As a Moral Problem," "The Moral Foundations of Communism," and "Tactics and Ethics").

A serious moral dilemma for the bolshevik-type communist parties is the relationship between democracy on the one hand, and party dictatorship that is called dictatorship of the proletariat, on the other. Are the basic standpoint and practice possible, permissible, and acceptable on the basis of political values and ethics, that every favorable opportunity must be exploited, and the instruments of dictatorship, ruthless repression or even terror must be used to proceed toward the goal, toward socialism? Or may the new social order be built only by democratic means and using the democratic system, by preaching and spreading the faith until the majority, too, will want socialism?

Every socialist revolution to date raised this moral and political question, and also now the everyday practice of socialist society is looking to us for an answer.

By turns the KMP [Hungarian CP], the MDP [Hungarian Workers Party] and the MSZMP all had to confront this dilemma in the course of Hungary's history. In the everyday practice of politics and in tense historical situations, the party's leadership always chose and followed the first alternative: in using "salami tactics" to pare down the coalition; during the period of ruthless class struggle carried into the party, of violent terror and intimidation; and during the fatal tragedy of 1956 as well.

Even today the MSZMP does not dare choose the morally and politically acceptable and only feasible answer: to build socialism with the means of real democracy, to preach and spread the faith, undertaking the extra effort that democracy requires. The question is on the agenda also today, and demands a new answer: the alternative of democratic socialism as the road chosen by the party, strictly and exclusively by democratic means.

The activity of the Hungarian CP is inspired even today by the ethical and political conviction, the essence of which is "class struggle without any regard or compromise . . ." (Gyorgy Lukacs).

And the essence of the ethical explanation and basic standpoint that offers dispensation is as follows: "This seemingly complete freedom of Marxism from the moral aspects of its actions is even more pronounced during the dictatorship of the proletariat. The class struggle becomes more ruthless yet" (Gyorgy Lukacs).

The moral foundation of the party's actions appears to have perished. But that is not true, Gyorgy Lukacs writes, because the "ruthlessness of class struggle" will end with building a classless society whose essence will be "mutual love and understanding." Until then, however, "relentless class struggle must be the standard of the proletariat's actions."

Whether or not the mode of action is suitable to achieve socialism as the final goal is the yardstick for judging actions. Specific actions are "tactical means" in relation to the "final goal." And as there are transitions between the two that cannot be defined conceptually, one can never know in advance which tactic will achieve the final goal (Gyorgy Lukacs). Therefore every means that leads to the final goal is good, and every means that jeopardizes the final goal is bad, Lukacs concludes in summing up his opinion. Lukacs acknowledges that "there are situations, tragic situations, in which it is impossible to act without committing a crime." But there is a yardstick even when it comes to choosing between two crimes: it is necessary to choose the one that involves the smaller sacrifice.

In politics, the basic moral standpoint that "murder is prohibited but necessary" dictates the political obligation of gaining power and holding on to it at all cost.

There are not longer any moral obstacles to political action, to wielding power. Indeed, it is a categorical imperative to be unethical and rid oneself of all moral constraints. This basic moral standpoint has governed the practice of the bolshevik-type communist parties for too many decades even after they came to power, for morality in politics and the moral constraints on political practice to be restored.

The Bolshevik-type Communist parties' basic moral standpoint—i.e., their unethical political practice—combined with the theses about their charisma and messianic historical mission, and supplemented by a sense of possessing the only correct ideology, gives the concrete implementers dispensation in specific situations to commit acts that are prohibited, politically, morally and legally as well. The prohibited and inhumane crime that is nevertheless "undertaken" with firm conviction even lends moral pathos and political glory to anyone acting in this manner.

In my opinion, without this peculiar basic ethical standpoint and conviction—alloyed with the party's other sociological and sociopsychological characteristics—we cannot hope to understand the period of brutal dictatorship. This basic ethical standpoint has never dominated

the practice of the MSZMP, and has never asserted itself as ruthlessly as in the preceding period, but it is present as a latent element of social psychology. Today an overwhelming majority of the party membership already rejects this basic standpoint, and so do some of the leaders. But in some of the local leaders, members of the apparatus and central leaders, regrettably, this basic standpoint is still present in the form of "past experience retained as memory" in the collective consciousness, which they apply in new ways in new situations. This basic ethical standpoint has shrunk, but has not disappeared. Under suitable social and organizational conditions, in the case of a political solution that wants to resolve a crisis at all cost and by every means, it could revive and become the basis in consciousness that determines the patterns of behavior in the course of exercising political power.

The road from the demoralization of politics to placing moral constraints on it leads through democratic reforms.

10. The party is essentially an organization that operates above the constitutional legal system and outside its framework.

The party dominates the constitutional legal system through its real, albeit informal, legislative role. The party's highest organs consider all important legislative proposals before they are debated in the National Assembly or in cabinet; first in principle, then again the concrete and detailed drafts. Thereafter the draft legislation cannot be changed without the highest party organs' consent, regardless of the draft legislation's public, professional or parliamentary debate.

Political control of the legislative process, and the public's and party membership's influence over it are completely lacking. The elements that make up the predominant decisionmaking will in legislation as a special decisionmaking process are the highest organs and governing bodies of the party, and the leaders of the apparatus. From the legislative practice of recent years it will suffice to mention: modification of the Law on Family Relations, enactment of the Press Law, modification of the National Assembly's rules of procedure, modification of the Criminal Code and Code of Criminal Procedure, enactment of the Law Decree on Associations, etc. All these are examples of legislation reflecting the party's legislating will, and no party leader or member of a party body ever had to account for them in public or argue in support of their enactment. Enactment of the legislation by the state is merely a formality in this political decisionmaking process that regulates important social relations and the citizens' basic rights and obligations.

The party's predominant role in determining the legislating will and what the statutory regulations contain violates democratic principles also in the sense that these statutory regulations are binding for party members and

nonmembers alike, and the latter justifiably object that a single party standpoint determines their basic rights and obligations, often also in areas far removed from the exercise of political power.

That the party influences legislation, and determines what it should be when fundamental political issues are involved, is acceptable even in a democratic political system. But the party is essentially exercising arbitrary legislative power without any public oversight whatsoever, infringing on and centralizing the authority of the state's legislative organs.

In the course of exercising power, whenever some law or other statutory regulation impedes the party's day-to-day interference, the party "rescinds" or sets aside a significant proportion of the very statutory regulations that in effect it forced the state's legislative organs to adopt.

Day after day the party's governing bodies are violating the Constitution (the party's will that the National Assembly dressed up as law) with their special directives, illegal decisions and authority-infringing practices.

The Central Committee and the Politburo have essentially taken over the National Assembly's legislative role in passing the annual state budget, approving the appropriations accounts, and adopting the national economic plan. The Politburo, or rather the general secretary heading it, decides arbitrarily and exclusively not only the appointments to top party posts, but also who will be president of the Presidential Council, prime minister, minister, supreme public prosecutor, president of the Supreme Court, ambassador, etc.

The party's legislative decisions, and the fact that it can set statutory regulations aside with its concrete decisions cast doubt on the legal system's effectiveness and security based on law.

A political system that lacks the constraints of moral and legal guaranties is able to offer only personal guaranties, which are never enough in political practice.

The role of the party organs and individual party leaders is excessive not only in legislation, but also in law enforcement where they sometimes interfere even in day-to-day matters. The real content of the policy guidelines for law enforcement is decided within the party.

11. The fact that organizationally the bolshevik-type communist parties functioned for over 20 years as an international party, or rather as the national detachments of an international communist organization (the Communist International), significantly determines their sociological character.

The parties' internal centralization applied also internationally, and they formed a highly centralized international party system. The Soviet CP's centralized system left its imprint on the international party system. It was a unified, highly organized, closely controlled and internationalist party system.

The national communist parties' independence declined to a minimum. In matters of ideology, organization and policies they had to submit completely to the directives of the international party's headquarters.

When the system of socialist countries emerged, the CPSU not only retained but also strengthened its close control of the national communist parties, even after the international organization for their coordination (Cominform) ceased.

The headquarters of the international communist party system comprised the apparatus of the Soviet CP, and the KGB that developed a chain of control which was in part joint with the former, and in part separate. (Hungary's State Security Authority and secret police had also direct links to the Soviet Union's KGB.) Although the international party system's organizational framework and institutions gradually ceased after 1956, the close international integration and recognition of the CPSU's leading role have remained unchanged. The conference of communist and worker parties in the mid-1960's acknowledged that the communist world movement had no international headquarters, and that Moscow and the CPSU could not be regarded as the the communist world movement's sole leader. In spite of this, however, relations with the Soviet Union remained the sole criterion of being communist. The mandatory copying of the Soviet example and model, the uniformization, has been relaxed gradually, but the pressure to preserve the common elements unalterably remains. The best example of this is how the Hungarian economic reforms were viewed in the late 1960's and early 1970's. The Soviet political leadership and most European socialist countries regarded the Hungarian reforms as almost unacceptable distinctness and departure from the socialist model that had been accepted as universal and ideal. The Eurocommunist parties were the ones to raise the possibility of different roads to socialism the most sharply, and the first to question—on the level of practical relations and ideological theses as well—the CPSU's role as international party headquarters, and the universal socialist nature of the Soviet road and model. Although the MSZMP is proclaiming more and more assertively the need for different and separate models and roads to socialism, it has not yet reached the point of definitely advocating a distinct and democratic Hungarian socialist road and model.

The decades of a closely controlled international party system (with or without a separate coordinating organization) have left, and are still maintaining, their sharp imprint on the operation of the national communist parties and the individual countries' party-centric political systems. The first response to any new, original solution is suspicious, aloofness, and a query regarding the CPSU's standpoint. This historically conditioned fear and obsession to follow suit, and occasionally real coercion, limit significantly the alternatives that the leaders of the MSZMP dare to consider and choose. The obsession to follow suit, and fear of the historical pluralism that exists internationally within the communist movement and socialism, are a factor that limit our scope for domestic reforms, and also our freedom to elaborate and undertake alternatives.

The fear and obsession to follow suit that narrow our political scope, and the ideological and political aversion from the very outset to anything different, new and original, exist in a large proportion of our political leadership as a product of the collective consciousness, impairing the present political leadership's judgment and limiting its will, even at a time when "reforms to dispel collective fear" have unfolded in the Soviet Union.

12. The mechanism of appointing leaders and filling seats on the governing bodies from above, and the absence or random occurrence of the leadership's rotation and renewal basically determine the party's character.

In practice the party membership has no opportunity whatsoever to nominate candidates for leadership positions, to suggest alternative personnel solutions, and to propose and decide the leaders' recall.

A gerontocracy controls the top posts in the party and the seats on its governing bodies. This gerontocracy is less and less able to function, and in many instances seems capricious. Typical of the much older leadership's capricious decisions is that it sends leaders 10 or 15 years younger into retirement, and unexpectedly elevates inexplicably chosen 40-year-old persons to the powerful governing bodies.

Some leaders occupied the same posts, or top posts in the same area, for 15 to 20 or even 30 years (Bela Biszku, Lajos Czinege, Gyorgy Aczel, Sandor Gaspar, the 10- to 20-year rule of some of the secretaries of megye party committees, etc.). The absence of much-needed rotation, multiple candidates, and spontaneously nominated alternative candidates deprives the party of the most important instrument of innovation, the renewal of its staff and leaders.

The mechanism of appointments from above, and the gerontocracy's "capricious" personnel policies for co-opting leaders are spreading from the party's practice to state and sociopolitical organizations.

The Bolshevik-type communist parties' sociological characteristic features are in part historically conditioned and have historically become decisive characteristics.

The characteristic features reinforce one another, and in a certain sense are interdependent. All the characteristic features have become objectified, and for the next generation they are already given, ready-made institutions, procedures, elements of the collective consciousness, the sum total of objectified ideological and normative organizational and political institutions. For the ever-newer party members, the maintenance and operation—i.e., acceptance—of the party's objectified and character-determining institutions are a fundamental and unquestionable organizational and normative obligation.

The historically extremely durable and seemingly almost immutable institutional, normative and ideological frameworks and elements, and the organizational and operating procedures have changed, albeit slowly. The slow change of one element forces the slow change of another or several other elements, the gradual displacement and fading of once dominant and predominant criteria and characteristic features, their diminishing significance. For example, the international party system's centralization has been loosened considerably; in fact, it has transformed itself into a still close but much less centralized international integration. There is less paranoid fear, belief in the party's charisma, passing-on of institutionalized charisma, politics free of moral constraints, centralization, etc.

In spite of these not insignificant changes, the party as a sociological formation has undergone changes and modifications, but has essentially preserved its historically evolved and institutionalized characteristics. The characteristic features that have faded or undergone modification during the past two or three decades (in part as objectified entities: norms, organizational solutions and procedures; and in part as past experience, knowledge, conditioning, prejudices, responsiveness, affective elements stored in society's consciousness) exist even today as potentialities. These will revive in conducive social situations and may be reactivated by the objective pressures and expectations of the concrete situations. The whole character of the party as an institution could change significantly from what it is now, forming a different overall constellation ("kinking") of the party's characteristic features.

Development of the features characteristic of the party as a whole cannot be left to historical chance, situational pressures or aggressive politicians.

Transformation of the party's organizational, institutional, normative, ideological, consciousness, psychological and action characteristics is party building that involves real historical responsibility. This historical party-building, and the party's transformation and reform, must be the result of collective effort, the yardstick for which is democracy.

The party will be a real reform party when, having carried out purposefully and consistently its own democratization, it becomes the leading political organizer of the reform movement for which democracy is the final goal, instrument, content and form.

III. The Socialist Bureaucracy's Main Characteristics

Once a bureaucracy emerges, it becomes an institution that is the most difficult to change. This proposition, advanced by Max Weber, holds true for the socialist bureaucracy as well. In the socialist countries a special bureaucracy developed, but attempts to uncover its historical and sociological characteristics have not been very successful so far. One is able to explore the political bureaucracy only by starting out from the political system as a whole, and from the ruling party's characteristics. Historically this bureaucracy is an heir to oriental state despotism of the Russian variety, and is determined by the social and historical functioning of the centralized bolshevik-type vanguard party.

The role of this special political bureaucracy in the history of socialism to date is so significant that it has become a formation-specific characteristic. We may distinguish the historical stage of socialism to date as bureaucratic socialism, as opposed to democratic socialism that is to be developed through democratic reforms.

What we are talking about is not simply the political sphere's bureaucratization and the political bureaucracy's predominance under socialism, but a bureaucracy that extends essentially to every social sphere.

The socialist bureaucracy cannot be understood or derived from the types of bureaucracy that Marx and Weber described, and its essence is not bureaucratic administration of affairs and tasks. The socialist bureaucracy's most important qualifying and determining factors are: the political system's predominance and decisive role within society; and the bolshevik-type political party's character.

The Socialist Political Bureaucracy's Sociological Characteristics

1. The primary distinguishing feature of the socialist political bureaucracy is that it is a party bureaucracy, rather than a state or state-administration bureaucracy. However, it is not simply a party bureaucracy that exercises power and asserts its interests within the party. Rather, it is a party bureaucracy such that the characteristics of its decisive role apply to the entire political system and even beyond it, to every social subsystem.

The basic characteristics of the state, economic, educational, local and central bureaucracies are characteristics conditioned by the party bureaucracy. Due to the concentration of power that exists in party-centric political systems, the special bureaucracies have become extended organs of the party bureaucracy, and their special bureaucratic characteristics apply only within the frames of reference that the predominant party bureaucracy sets. But the special bureaucracies—the economic and enterprise bureaucracy, the educational bureaucracy, the health-care bureaucracy, the trade-union bureaucracy, the youth organization's bureaucracy, the associations' bureaucracy, the law-enforcement bureaucracy, the military bureaucracy, etc.—have certain special features.

As a result of the concentration of power in the party-centric political system, the political bureaucracy links the special bureaucracies of all the social subsystems and spheres of activity into a single societywide bureaucratic system, which it controls and operates internally on the basis of identical dominant criteria. The party's organizational structure based on the so-called plant principle, and the institutional and territorial party organizations' perquisites of power and decisionmaking "role" create politically impossible, sociologically conflict-ridden, and personally often insoluble situations.

Consider the secretary of a ministry's party committee who dealt with a narrow range of administrative matters for 15 to 20 years and then suddenly becomes the party committee's secretary, through the vagaries of party elections. His is supposed to be the No 1 coordinating and codirecting role, alongside the minister who is a member of the Central Committee, and who probably headed a Central Committee department earlier. The party secretary's role is ridiculous and "tragically ludicrous," both when he takes the authority of his office seriously, and when he is just a dedicated extra next to the minister.

Another example: The partner of a large enterprise's chief executive, of its director general, is the party secretary who has considerable say in political and economic matters, but whom the vagaries of party elections placed in the party secretary's seat from a lowly position providing very limited grasp of the enterprise's situation.

The party committee secretary assisting the rector of a university, which has a faculty and student body totaling 5,000 to 6,000 persons, comes from a marginal university department, and overnight he becomes involved in making important decisions affecting educational and personnel policies.

We could continue this list with, say, the Budapest district party committees that control politics at enterprises employing 5,000, 10,000 or 15,000 workers.

Of course, the influence and significance of the party bureaucracy stem not from the system of institutional party organizations, but from the central party bureaucracy's concentration of power.

The political bureaucracy regulates and politically controls the entire process of society's reproduction.

The party bureaucracy is an organ of the concentrated power structure and, through its concentrated power, integrates the other special bureaucracies.

2. The political bureaucracy's essence is that it is a party bureaucracy, but amalgamated with the state or state-administration bureaucracy.

The party bureaucracy amalgamates with the state bureaucracy; through its concentration of power and centralization, however, it "suctions" and absorbs the state bureaucracy. Despite the interlocking organizations, the plurality of state and party offices held simultaneously, and the close cooperation in preparing decisions jointly, however, we cannot speak of an essentially "pure" party bureaucracy, nor of a "pure" and essentially distinct state bureaucracy.

Under the command-directed system of managing the economy, the economic bureaucracy became the third element, besides the party bureaucracy and the state bureaucracy, to be amalgamated into the political bureaucracy.

Today, under the system of managing the economy through "indirect planning directives," the earlier three-component political bureaucracy is essentially breaking up. And although the state bureaucracy administering the economy remains a component of the political bureaucracy as before, in its composition the latter is gradually becoming a party-state bureaucracy. The economic bureaucracy or bureaucracies that are gradually splitting off are becoming more and more distinct, are forming independent structures, and are functioning in accordance with their own interests.

The party remains the dominant element in the intertwined and (mainly at the peaks) interlocking party-state bureaucracy.

The state bureaucracy is the principal preparer of party decisions. But it wields little power, its autonomy is practically nonexistent, and therefore it continues to be able to function as a special bureaucracy only in a limited sense. The extent to which it is able to use its special bureaucratic and professional principles, knowledge and information to influence the decisions that are being adopted is extremely limited and depends on the party bureaucracy's "discretion."

Although the party-state bureaucracy's two elements are closely intertwined, there are constant tensions and conflicts between them.

3. The functioning of the party-state political bureaucracy, and the substance of its decisions are ideocratically limited. Actually the preponderance of ideological content in the information on which the decisions are based ensures for the bureaucracy's decisions only a limited rationality, dominated by whatever ideological content happens to be timely and concretely conveyed at the given time.

Consequently, the party-state political bureaucracy lets an ideocratically limited (ideologically dominated) rationality influence its decisions.

4. The party-state political bureaucracy is an organ of power concentration. The administrative apparatus, rather than elected representative state and/or party organs, controls the system. Essentially in no sphere and at no level do the elected bodies and representative organs control their own apparatuses.

5. The political bureaucracy, which determines the process of society's reproduction and exercises political power, has also legislative power. The real legislative organs are not the state representative bodies empowered by law to legislate, but the political administrative organizations that prepare the legislation and assert the legislating will, within both the party's and the state's organizational structure.

6. Despite the fact that the political bureaucracy embodies the real legislating will, in the course of its activity the political bureaucracy may in part disregard provisions of the law, and in part it has outgrown the legal system, in the sense that a significant proportion of its activity is not regulated by law.

7. Every (professional and special) bureaucracy has its own interests and professional knowledge. The socialist political bureaucracy's particular professional knowledge is how to gain and hold onto power, the special professional knowledge necessary to exercise political power exclusively. The components of this special professional knowledge are: a simplified social philosophy and a rigid ideological system, which is fairly easy to learn and which alone is able to uncover correctly the interrelations of reality; a special sense of mission stemming from the preceding conviction; a political morality; knowledge and experience of the arsenal of instruments by which the centralistic will is absolutely enforced; absolute respect for the central will; especially intensified organizational conformity and organizational fear; belief in the omnipotence of the political will; and exaggerated sense of responsibility for society's problems that must be solved. These generalized elements of consciousness, the knowledge and experience that make the mechanism work, these special skills constitute a peculiar political culture that permeates and characterizes the entire political bureaucracy.

8. Through its income-withdrawing, distributing and redistributing role, the political bureaucracy exercises society's rights of ownership and possession.

The political bureaucracy as a whole has claimed and expropriated society's rights stemming from the public ownership and possession of the means of production. Individual members of the bureaucracy do not enjoy these rights.

The socialist system of public property to date has become institutionalized as ownership and possession by the political bureaucracy.

9. Due to the high degree of centralization of the spheres of authority and to the organizational concentration, the socialist political bureaucracy is functioning as a highly centralized, overcentralized and concentrated organizational system and institutionalized structure.

10. Despite the strict centralization and the mass of formalized regulations, the spheres of authority are defined according to a peculiar spoils system for dividing and redividing power. As the principle of structuring power and the spheres of authority, the spoils system for dividing and redividing power has spread also to other organizations and is typical of the entire political system.

11. The political bureaucracy has become the most important organizational framework for lobbying, asserting interests and taking them into consideration.

Since the political bureaucracy has real power and the ability to assert interests, interest aspirations are directed toward the political bureaucracy, its organs and positions, in an attempt to obtain a decision favoring the given interests, and to influence the decisionmaking will to set aside the opposing interests.

Through its function of taking interests into consideration, asserting them, and transforming the interest aspirations into the decisionmaking political will, the political bureaucracy is overshadowing the representative and other public bodies, and is undermining their importance.

12. The formal and informal power structures are separate in every organization. Within the socialist political bureaucracy the sharp separation of the formalized and the nonformalized, real structures of decisionmaking authority have become institutionalized in a system-typical and system-specific manner.

The mechanisms that maintain the institutionalized separation of the formal and informal power structures are as follows:

a) The subordination, in a sociological sense, of the representative bodies vested with formal authority, to the political bureaucracy's administrative apparatus, within both the party and the state organs;

b) The too strong individual power and influence of the party's top leader, over the power of other individuals and bodies. The preponderance of his individual power is felt by the organizations, bodies and top officials vested with formal authority;

c) Under the system of appointments from above, the filling of elective positions is decided in advance, which makes the formal authority of the electing bodies illusory;

d) In the ideocratically limited decisionmaking system, the decision-preparing individuals and organizations that have the professional knowledge which relatively professional decisions "of limited rationality" require are substantially better qualified to make decisions than the political governing bodies are. The political governing bodies are not able to counterbalance, not even with outside experts, this professional knowledge and will of the professional bureaucracy that prepares decision alternatives determined by its own interests. The party bureaucracy's "committees of experts" and "working collectives" are either completely unfit to make professional decisions and present proposals on matters requiring professional knowledge (for example, the Central Committee's Agitation and Propaganda Committee, etc.); or the members of the state organizations preparing the decisions dominate these bodies. Incidentally, the inclusion of outside experts is able to rationalize the political bureaucracy's decisions only to a very limited extent. Because, under "consultative authoritarianism," the political bureaucracy: (1) is very selective about calling in outside experts to prepare decisions; (2) tells them in advance what decision it wants to make, and for which the experts' help is being sought; and (3) if a different decision alternative or solution is drafted anyhow, the political bureaucracy simply disregards it when formulating its final decision.

Due to the institutionalized separation and "great distance" of the formalized structure and the informal structure of decisionmaking authority, how the political system functions can be perceived and understood only by exploring simultaneously this dual power structure.

The dual power structure demands strict conformity from the members of the organizations that maintain and operate it, and it poses a peculiar problem of socialization for them.

13. Due to its ideocratic limitation, the interlocking party-state bureaucracy is unable to effectively incorporate the wide range of special knowledge that the decisions require.

Because of the concentration of power and the absence of functionally autonomous bureaucratic decision-preparing and decisionmaking organizations and bodies, the decision-preparing professional bureaucracy is unable to effectively limit the interest-determined political will and confine it within its proper scope.

Faced with political voluntarism, the decision-preparing professional bureaucracy is unable to openly and verifiably counterpose another political will, or invoke professional arguments and the laws of nature or society as constraining factors. Furthermore, beyond a certain point, it is contrary to the decision-preparing professional bureaucracy's interests to risk conflicts, because the political will would override it and jeopardizes its interests as well.

The decision-preparing professional bureaucracy is willing to promote professional rationalities, and to condense the background information on which the decisions are based, only up to the point where its own special organizational and bureaucratic interests are not yet jeopardized. Because it has no position of power, and the centralistic political will may question its autonomy at any time, the decision-preparing professional bureaucracy conforms to the political will, and to the "professional knowledge" or decision-determining background information that the centralistic political will prefers.

14. The system-specific characteristics of the political system and of the socialist political bureaucracy have prevented the evolution of the three distinct but integrated elements of a modern bureaucracy:

* Politicians;
* Specialists in administrative law;
* Experts.

The socialist political bureaucracy is headed not by politicians, but by bureaucrats, or more accurately, by leaders performing bureaucratic functions. The whole system of political bureaucracy neither wants nor tolerates the autonomous, relatively independent political leader. Thus even the leaders who formally hold political office and are able to engage in politics, occupy bureaucratic posts as parts of the bureaucratized power structure.

Instead of specialists in administrative law—who would be able to handle a huge volume of administrative chores and matters as prescribed by law, legally, controllably and predictably—we have laymen assigned to administrative duties, political bureaucrats who learned a routine in the course of their socialization in the political organization. As for the specialists in administrative law, their professionally correct and lawful activity is limited by the political will and the political bureaucracy's interest. The professional part of their activity is limited ideocratically and by the political bureaucracy's self-interest.

In preparing the decisions, and in some areas also in making them, modern public administration cannot dispense with the inclusion of experts independent of the politicians heading the bureaucracy, and of the specialists in administrative law working within the official hierarchy.

Certain levels of the political bureaucracy employ experts, and many organizations have their own scientific research institutes. But these experts, respectively scientific institutes, fit into the bureaucratic subordination. They do not have autonomous and protected positions separate from the bureaucratic structure. Their expertise becomes a "service" for their client, the bureaucracy.

Due to the absence of these three structural elements that perform different functions, and are autonomous and independent of one another as well as of the political bureaucracy dominating the system, the social and professional effectiveness of the socialist political bureaucracy is extremely low, and the prepared and adopted decisions are poor in terms of their content and quality. Although the concentration of power at the individual levels and positions of power within the centralized political bureaucracy is excessive, and a system of public oversight is lacking, only the system itself, rather than the individual top officials, wields truly great power.

The system's power and decisive influence are not simply the sum total of the power held in the individual positions. The power of the system as a whole is preponderant even in relation to the top officials who maintain the system, intensifying to the point of their defenselessness.

In this power structure the individuals who occupy positions of power, from where they maintain and operate the system, do not dominate the system. Instead, the system dominates those who maintain it.

16. Selection to top positions, and advancement within the political bureaucracy are not based on professional knowledge, or on social and professional effectiveness and recognition. The party and state bureaucracies both lack mandatory special professional examinations, competitive examinations, professional and managerial aptitude tests and testing procedures.

Political reliability is the basis for selection and advancement to top posts within the political bureaucracy. Political reliability essentially means the personal reliability and loyalty that the appointing person demands, and the professional knowledge he considers adequate.

Incidentally, political reliability is an entirely relative basis of selection and criterion for appointment. It cannot be regulated by law, and is too broadly formulated politically. Therefore it provides opportunity for the completely uncontrolled exercise of appointing authority "won" under the "spoils system."

The sociological characteristics of the socialist political bureaucracy stem from its position in the party-centric political system and from its social functions. The individual characteristic features are system-specific elements of an historically institutionalized power structure. The system-specific criteria characterize the entire system, and not of course its individual members and organizations. The departure, from the system-specific characteristics, of some of the organizations, concrete institutions, or patterns of official and organizational behavior in specific instances, does not call into question the criteria that are valid as trends for the entire system.

The bureaucracy is an historical formation, a consequence of a particular power structure under socialism. Rather than stem from the bureaucratic mentality of individuals, it is a consequence of the power structure.

The bureaucratic structures, organizations and operating mechanisms can be changed, limited and controlled only on the basis of the power structure's democratic transformation.

Bureaucratic organizations, structures and procedures cannot be abolished entirely, not even in a democratic power structure. On the one hand, however, society can limit and significantly reduce their proliferation and power; and on the other hand, their effectiveness can be increased by streamlining the bureaucracy's operation and enforcing a suitable degree of bureaucratic rationality. In the integrated system of other rationalities and -cracies (democracy, bureaucracy, logocracy, technocracy, etc., to borrow a phrase from Csaba Gombar), bureaucratic rationality must play a subordinate but necessary role. The political bureaucracy stems from political power, and it can be limited by political power, democratic political power. Its social origin and source is not an organization or some kind of mentality, rather the power structure itself demands a bureaucratic structure.

Some Sociological Characteristics of Hungary's Government Machinery

The political government is the key element of the political system and power-exercising political bureaucracy.

The political government and the administrative government [executive branch] are not the same thing. Fig. 1 is a schematic diagram of Hungary's political government. It is evident also from this diagram that the legal status of the individual organizations, as defined by law and the party's rules, differs significantly from their respective ranks in the real sociological power hierarchy.

In the following we will examine some of the more important sociological characteristics of the government as defined by constitutional law (the central, general and special, administrative organs) and of the political government (the central organizations that actually exercise political direction and control, and perform political tasks). The characteristics apply to the government machinery as a whole, and we will not consider the special characteristics and influence of individual persons and positions of power.

1. In addition to the government or government machinery as defined by constitutional law, we can clearly distinguish also the political government that performs the real functions of government in the political and sociological sense. The political government's elements are:

- The party's general secretary;
- The Politburo;
- The Central Committee Secretariat;
- The Central Committee's apparatus, departments and committees;
- The cabinet council;
- The government commissions;
- The ministers and the apparatuses of the ministries.

Essentially the government in the political sense occupies the political system's center of power. The administrative government or administrative government machinery is only a part of this political government, which forms a fairly accurately defined hierarchy. At the top of this hierarchy are the Politburo, and the [Central Committee] Secretariat that in many respects is intertwined with the former. Below the Politburo and the Secretariat is the Central Committee's apparatus, followed by the cabinet council, and by the government commissions concerned with economic matters. On the lowest level are the noneconomic government commissions, and the ministers.

2. The sources from which the government's administrative organs and cabinet members derive their power vary:

a) A seat on the Politburo and Central Committee;

b) An income-withdrawing and redistributing function under the system of redistributive bureaucratic ownership and possession;

c) Professional and organizational contacts established earlier in one's political career, especially in the case of ministers who came from Party Headquarters and the party apparatus, to positions within the state administration;

d) Conflict-avoiding, -reconciling or -resolving system-specific organizational behavior with corresponding personality traits, and their successful acceptance within the power structure;

e) Professional and political aptitude, recognition, and social and political prestige.

3. Members of the government in the administrative sense hold equal positions of power according to constitutional law, but actually they are arranged in a very strict hierarchy of political power. The scheme of their hierarchic arrangement is as follows:

—The prime minister is also a member of the Politburo, and his power and influence stem essentially from his seat there. Actually the prime minister performs his functions as chairman of the cabinet council not within the cabinet council itself, but on the Politburo. Within the cabinet council the prime minister supports the results of the proposals, reconciliations of interests, and decisions before and by the Politburo, as political decisions made in advance, and he organizes their formal approval by the cabinet.

—Next in descending order within the hierarchy is the chairman of the National Planning Office. He is also a deputy prime minister and the chairman or a member of the government commissions concerned with economic matters.

—The minister of finance comes next in the hierarchy. He maintains close contact with the Central Committee secretary in charge of the economy, with the Central Committee's economic apparatus, and, through his seat on the government commissions concerned with economic matters, with the chairman of the National Planning Office who is also a deputy prime minister.

—The ministers of defense, interior and foreign affairs occupy special positions of power and influence, because in practice the decisions regarding matters in their respective portfolios are within the scope of the Politburo's or the Secretariat's authority, and are closely coordinated by the central party apparatus. Consequently, the respective ministers and agendas of the Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Interior, and Ministry of Foreign Affairs are exempt in practice from the cabinet council's authority. The power and influence of these cabinet members stem from the fact that in practice they are neither accountable to the cabinet council, nor are required to furnish it with information. Their direct power relations link them to the appropriate leaders and bodies of the Central Committee.

—At the next level within the hierarchy are the branch ministers who directly manage some productive sphere and usually have a seat on the State Planning Commission or the Economic Commission or both. Such branch ministers are the ministers of industry, agriculture and food, and foreign trade.

—The other ministers are at the bottom of the hierarchy within the cabinet council. They are the specifically targeted recipients of redistribution and have no links to the productive sphere. Their ability to assert interests and to accept and handle conflicts is low. For instance, the minister of health, and the minister of culture and education are at this level.

4. The general sociological characteristics of the decisionmaking processes that have evolved within government organs are as follows:

a) The decisionmaking processes take place essentially in the informal sphere, and the preponderance of that sphere is typical of them. The reconciliation of interests, by allowing the individual interests to surface and then resolving their clashes through suitable compromises, the infringement and constraint of authority, and the peculiar spoils system of holding power, function essentially in the informal sphere, within the framework of horizontal relations.

b) Typical of the process by which decisions are formed is that they are not laid down in writing. Instead, the decisions are shaped and formulated orally, by telephone, or in small ad hoc conferences.

c) The nonwritten reconciliation procedures and the informal sphere's peculiar activity in reconciling interests and wills essentially interlock the administrative organs of both the party and the state. This telescoping of the government organs'—the political bureaucracy's— organizations characterizes the organizational structure and mechanism of preparing decisions.

d) As a result of the obligations to reconcile interests in advance, the decision alternatives are too general and rounded off by the time they are presented to the decisionmaking bodies.

e) Due to overcautiousness, the ministries buck decisions to the cabinet council, while the Politburo and the Secretariat suction off ministry decisions for themselves, through the cabinet council. This bucking of decisions upward and the suctioning off of decisionmaking authority, due in both cases to overcautiousness, occur simultaneously and add to the centralization of the already centralized decisionmaking mechanism.

f) As a result of the preceding sociological characteristics, the organized unaccountability is perpetuated.

g) Personal subordination, ideocratic essence, ideological fear and institutional self-reproduction permeate the decisionmaking processes.

h) Professional rationalities mostly become exhausted or are overridden in the decisionmaking processes.

5. There is a characteristic horizontal mobility of cadres between the Central Committee apparatus (department heads and their deputies) and the Central Committee secretaries on the one hand, and the cabinet members, the prime minister and his deputies on the other; and also between the lower echelons of the Central Committee apparatus (sections chiefs and staff members), and the deputy ministers and state secretaries. The leaders of sociopolitical organizations—for example, the SZOT apparatus, the top officials of the PPF and of the KISZ Central Committee, and the leaders of other sociopolitical organizations—are also included in this mechanism of horizontal cadre mobility. The essence of this characteristic horizontal mobility is that political reliability,

which in most cases means reliability from a personal viewpoint, is the most important expectation and criterion for an appointment. Professional competence is less important, and in very many instances the appointed top officials know nothing about the areas entrusted to their care. Due to the institutionalization and perpetuation of political reliability as a requirement, professional competence is practically never considered when appointing cadres.

6. As an institutionalized and objectified mechanism, the government machinery in the administrative sense, as well as the government machinery in the political sense, dominates the individuals who maintain and operate the system. These individuals, both severally and jointly, are unable to transform the system and dominate it. Instead of individuals dominating the mechanism or system, it dominates them completely. The individual ministers, deputy ministers, and other members of the system are captives of their own system. First, they are its captives because in practice their influence upward is small and sharply curtailed by centralization; the strong centralization and the system of power dependence completely delimit their scope upward. Secondly, their scope downward is completely delimited by their own bureaucracy, which they actually do not control. The bureaucracy, too, has become a self-preserving mechanism, and the ministers and other members of the cabinet do not have sufficient power and influence to change it. Third, cabinet members are captives of their own system also because their own bad decisions, respectively the decisions taken above them, determine their actions and scope, from which they are unable to depart; these decisions force them onto a fixed trajectory.

7. The consequences of the evolved government mechanism are as follows:

—A decisionmaking mechanism of extremely low effectiveness has developed, and it is slow and self-reproducing.

—Organized unaccountability has become chronic.

—Openness and public oversight of the government's work are completely lacking.

—There is a special counterselection in gaining admission to the government sphere, in the system of horizontal mobility, and as a result of career changes as well.

—The governmental, party and administrative organizations, committees and apparatuses are interlocked.

—Informal preparation of the decisions, informal decisionmaking, and the absence of openness are typical of the decisionmaking processes.

—The formalized and the nonformalized decisionmaking and power-exercising mechanisms are completely separate.

—The most important personnel and policy decisions are not laid down in writing, and therefore it is impossible to trace their trail.

—The concern of the Politburo, Secretariat, Central Committee apparatus and government organs with day-to-day matters, their overburdening with decisions, and, as a result of the extremely strong centralization, the decisionmaking organs' professional incompetence have become chronic.

—There is no real political government exercising political direction and control; actually there is only an administrative government. Not only is the executive branch an administrative government in the sense that it carries out higher decisions and organizes their implementation, but also the center of government in the political sense has become an administrative government center, instead of a real political center. Within the narrower government in the sociological sense, the cabinet's role has essentially been taken over by the Politburo and a few individuals. The [Central Committee] secretaries in charge of, respectively, the economy, interior and defense, and foreign affairs complement the Politburo as an administrative government, even when they themselves are not Politburo members. The secretary in charge of ideology is also a member of the political cabinet in the narrower sense, due in part to his seat on the Politburo (or at least that has been the situation up to now). He and the aforementioned secretaries, with or without seats on the Politburo, actually serve as key ministers who maintain tight control over the day-to-day running of their areas and are closely intertwined with the real administrative government machinery. In this sense, then, a peculiar political cabinet has evolved within Hungary's political government machinery.

—The Politburo members, of course, are not equal in terms of their power and influence, either. The general secretary has the most power and influence. After him in the hierarchy of power come the Politburo members who are directly in charge of well-defined social spheres and are also secretaries of the Central Committee. The secretary in charge of the economy, for instance, and up to now the secretary for ideology. Next come the Politburo members who represent large sociopolitical organizations or are the heads of day-to-day administrative organs. For example, the prime minister, and the chairman of the SZOT. Next in the hierarchy of power come the other members of the Politburo. Actually the prime minister performs his duties as cabinet council chairman in the Politburo: he transmits the Politburo's decisions to the administrative government machinery.

8. What determines the characteristics of the political government endowed with particular sociological features is actually the system-specific principles and mechanisms of the entire political system as a whole. (The political system's primacy, the party-centric political system, the concentration of power and the monopolistic power bloc, the high degree of centralization, the spoils system of dividing spheres of authority, etc.)

9. Changing the way the political government's sphere—including its constituent, the administrative government machinery—operates cannot be imagined as the government sphere's rationalization, the abolition or transformation of commissions, the streamlining of the government's internal operating mechanism, and the rationalization of the ministry apparatuses. The political government's sphere as a whole can be changed, rationalized and made democratic only by reforming the entire government sphere in the political sense.

10. The characteristics that determine the essence of political government, of the system of political direction and control, are as follows:

a) The essence of political direction and control is by nature ideocratic, determined by political ideology. Society's direction and control, the social system, and society's political scope are derived from this ideological system which, albeit changing, is always rigidly institutionalized and objectified.

b) The essence of power always depends on the person exercising it. In other words, the essence is not based on the objective power that develops in the institutionalized power mechanism. Rather, the personal power relations at any given time determine the essence of exercising power, the interests and policies behind the decisions, and the selection of leaders.

c) The system has enormous historical inertia: the evolved solutions and institutions, and the experiences acquired to date are reproducing themselves and have become historically permanent. This mechanism is essentially a self-reproducing political system that is based on historical self-reproduction. And the fourth characteristic of the ideocratic, person-dependent and historically inertial mechanism of governing and exercising power is chronic fear. Historical experience, and the political and person-dependent limitations override professional competence, making it difficult to solve things and problems on the basis of their own immanent laws.

11. The extent to which the political and administrative centers of government are concentrated is enormous. Hence it follows that it is primarily this concentration of the political center of government which has to be relaxed in order to broaden its scope, as well as the scopes of the system's individual elements, enabling them to organize themselves and operate the way their

special functions require, to exercise a certain fundamental control and supervision over one another's activity, and to undertake the advocacy of their particular interests and alternatives, allowing them to clash and resolving the conflicts through the reconciliation of interests. Rationalization of either the political government's or the administrative government's work cannot be imagined without relaxing the concentration of the center of government in the political sense.

Rationalization of the political and administrative governments' activity can be achieved essentially through the entire system's democratization. In this sense the system's democratization would act as the principal instrument of rationalization.

Disorders, Distortions of Political Values

A value disorder in most cases is merely an indication of some more serious sociopolitical tension or unsolved problem. Political values are not only the basic regulators of everyday behavior; they are also substantive elements of political programs, goals, and the mechanism for exercising power. Therefore a value crisis or value disorder is not merely a disorder of the behavior-influencing system.

Every society's system of values has an interminably plural structure, and also the individual social spheres (the economy, politics, culture, etc.) may each have several different sets of values simultaneously. However, the basic cause of value crises and value disorders is not the plurality of values and value systems; hence to strive to form some homogeneous realm of values is not the solution. A plurality of values in itself is not a value disorder. The conflicts between individual systems of values can be resolved. Or rather, a person or collective is able to choose, accept and adopt a value from among spontaneous and conscious choices and preferences, and to do so fairly definitely, without any need for too profound or lengthy meditation. A religious person's commitment to his values will not be shaken when he perceives a conflict with an atheist's system of values, and conversely. The choice of the various subcultures' and countercultures' value components is made in full awareness of society's values, and against them. The same can be said of the rejection of the subcultures and countercultures. Disorders of political values do not stem from the existence, side by side, of clearly distinct and different systems of political values. The more serious value disorders arise specifically when the values of sharply distinct political movements merge and mix.

Thus deeper political and social disorders, rather than the plurality of values, cause the disorders of political values.

The principal causes and manifestations of political-value disorders within our society's political system are as follows:

1. Disorders in the process of formulating values as theses;

2. The absence of the value systems' external harmonization, the absolutization of some system of values;

3. The absence of a value system's internal harmonization: the system is not coherent, consistent and institutionalized;

4. There is a double linkage, and the double system of values has a relativizing effect;

5. Mistaken or confused values: a nonvalue or negative value is formulated as a value;

6. The absence of collectives causes shortcomings in the mechanisms of formulating, maintaining and enforcing values;

7. Society's hierarchy of values collapses, causing a crisis of the political leadership's legitimation;

8. Disorders in the continuity of values.

(1) The factor causing the most serious disorder in the process of formulating values as theses is that socialism still lacks a clear and unambiguous system of political values. What we have in mind here, of course, is not some code of political values. Rather, the fact that disputes over the interpretation of values will inevitably become permanent unless the values advanced as theses are formulated in democratic debate and are being interpreted fairly uniformly, while the opposite values are rejected. Moreover, the debates are not public or, for the most part, are nonexistent. Within the political leadership and among politicians there is not even relative agreement on the essence and hierarchy of fundamental political values (freedom, equality, justice, democracy, etc.).

On the one hand, the obscurity of the values that the political elite accepts makes that stratum itself uncertain. And on the other hand, it is not clear to the members of society what is after all the essence of the value they have to identify with, what are the values for which the political leadership can be held accountable, and what yardstick can be used to judge their own activities, the activities of others, and those of the political leadership.

The other factor causing serious disorders in formulating values as theses is the monopolization of this process. This monopoly manifests itself partly in that it is the exclusive privilege of the leaders who happen to be at the top of the power hierarchy just then, to identify the values and interpret their essence. Or if they themselves do not undertake to formulate the political values clearly and unambiguously, then they do not allow others to do so, either. And yet it is possible to formulate values, and to present them as theses, only in democratic debate, within collectives, on the basis of a fairly broad social consensus. Because all this is lacking, our society's political leadership does not have a set of political values that

can be defined fairly unambiguously and have been accepted by public consensus. The monopoly on formulating values as theses, or the prevention of alternative formulation, can lead to even more serious disorder when confidence in the formulating political leadership or political elite is shaken. The loss of confidence in the formulators strengthens the demand for alternative formulation. Although the institutionalization of alternative formulation can be prevented, that does not resolve the "official" and exclusive formulators' crisis of confidence.

(2) The absence of the value system's external harmonization does not mean, of course, that the system is not harmonized with another system of political values whose essence is just the opposite. Rather, the absence of harmonization manifests itself in that an absolutized system of political values politicizes the systems of moral, economic and legal values, to such extent that it replaces them and does not allow their respective, unique moral, economic and legal essence to assert itself.

The constraint of moral and legal values on the system of political values ceases, and the system becomes morally and legally unconstrained. The absolutization of politics has relativized both the moral and the legal values, or has degraded them into means. But if a system of political values is not forced to submit itself to the "criticism" of other systems of political values, and if even its own systems of moral and legal values do not constrain it, then the political values of constantly changing essence lead to the complete relativism of values, of the realm of political values and of the systems of moral and legal values as well.

It will perhaps suffice to cite, e.g., the complete relativization and degrading of values during the period of personality cult, and the complete subordination of legal, moral and economic values to political objectives. But the following are not clear even now: whether the end justifies the means; where the limits of political effectiveness are; whether legal values and legal institutions can constrain the political leadership's objectives; whether public representation of the common interest is a value of higher order than its restriction; whether the limits declared in the public institutions can be applied to the insisting central will; are there any restrictions at all on the central will and on the means it may choose; and where are the political-and moral-value constraints on curtailing the civil rights ensured in the Electoral Law.

Another factor causing serious disorder in the external harmonization of political values arises when the formulated political values remain theses that are not objectified as legal institutions, or when just the opposite legal institutions are established that block the assertion of the formulated values.

Freedom, equality, democracy, humanism, etc. as fundamental political values must be guaranteed and objectified in a coherently interlinked system of legal institutions that is free of gaps; not only to ensure the effective-ness of the political values formulated as theses, and enable the citizen to rely on their effectiveness; but also to make the officials and leaders of the state and political organizations accountable for the formulated political values, and to prevent the enforcement of negative values that are the opposites of the formulated ones. More than just a gap in the legal system or a legislative error, the absence of legal institutions guaranteeing democracy as a political value permits the emergence of antidemocratic practices, without making it obvious that they are unlawful.

(3) Primarily the absence of public oversight makes disorders possible in the internal harmonization of the system of political values. As a result, mutually exclusive or negative values may be formulated for the system of political values, or the exaggeration of one value may render the effectiveness of another value impossible. The exaggeration of the political value categories and derived values may lead to democracy's frequently criticized weaknesses and pitfalls. Thus freedom may develop into license; equality, into egalitarianism; plurality, into dissension and disintegration; the principle of rotation, into instability and unpredictability of the personnel; protection of minorities, into anarchy; tolerance, into moral and political corruption, etc.

The harmonization of values can be achieved in the course of the collectives' public political activity, and daily public oversight can guarantee the harmonized, mutually constraining but also mutually reinforcing effectiveness of the values.

(4) The development of a double linkage and of a double system of values causes a serious disorder, a crisis, of values in our society. We speak of a double linkage when there is a significant discrepancy between the values that the same formulator presents as theses, and the ones he actually asserts in practice. This may also happen when the values formulated as theses are unacceptable, while the values asserted in practice have a positive, corrective role, or conversely. For example, practice developed a positive, corrective system of values against the formulated and advanced values of organizational concentration, centralization, and too strong central direction and control. But this relativized the formulted and advanced values even in cases when their assertion would have played a positive role.

Another case of developing a double system of values is when the formulated and advanced values are truly positive and generally accepted, but a different system of values applies in the everyday mechanism of exercising political power. This doubling of the system of values poses a general danger: the frequently changing system of values that is being observed, or can be observed, in practice may relativize all the constraints that the values

impose; and the dismantled values may be replaced not by new values, but by practical outlooks on life, by cynical justifications of activities that ensure organizational success and advancement in careers.

This strongly demoralizes not only the members of society, but the operators of the political organizations and institutions as well.

Thus the doubling of values does not necessarily mean that two sets of values have been established (the proclaimed set of values, and the other that is being observed). Rather, it means respectively that the proclaimed values remain constant, while the values that are actually being observed change fairly rapidly; and that the values are displaced by pragmatic outlooks on life and success, by pragmatic principles and patterns of behavior that make for a successful way of life. And this actually means the dismantling of values, without the development of new values to replace them.

(5) We may speak of mistaken or confused values when a nonvalue (a method, procedure, etc.) or a negative value is formulated and advanced as a value. A typical case is the formulation and advancement of centralization and organizational concentration as values, whereas they are relativistically applicable methods. But formulating and advancing them as values has overshadowed the values of democracy, self-government, autonomy, etc.

(6) The absence of collectives is causing serious value disorders within our society. Collectives, particularly political collectives, are lacking not because there is no demand for them, but because their organization and operation are institutionally limited or, one might say, "value constrained." This despite the fact that the organization of collectives, and their inclusion in the political decisionmaking process belong among socialism's political values.

Collectives are the real medium in which values are formulated and advanced as theses, validated, passed on, and enforced. Therefore the absence of collectives is conducive to the development of practically every kind of value disorder. Failure to formulate and harmonize values within collectives, the avoidance of double linkages, prevention of negative values, etc. [as published].

(7) Society's value systems are arranged in a hierarchy. Among its systems of political values, the one advanced by the political leadership of the day has to gain the widest acceptance (and not just within the leadership's own collective).

The power elite (over and above its sheer possession of power) can become society's leading stratum specifically by gaining acceptance of not only its sheer possession of power, but of the correctness of its power as well. The power elite, of course, does not have a free hand in formulating its own system of values; it must borrow also from the system of values that has evolved within society, and must preserve the positive and historically validated values. Failure to do so will result in that the power elite's own formulated system of values will become isolated and divorced from reality; and although the power elite will retain its dominant power function, it will lose its role of formulating and advancing values for entire society. Another way of putting this is to say that the political elite and the social elite become separate. This separation may also cause a serious crisis of the political leadership's legitimation, because the political leadership cannot hold onto its position of power without the validation and acceptance of its system of values. The crisis of the legitimation of the political leadership's position of power and political leading role appears in the form of a crisis of values, which may switch over into a crisis of political power at any time.

(8) The disorders in the continuity of values stem primarily from absolutizing the negation of the scales of values accepted and institutionalized earlier, from distorting the dialectics of discarding and retaining. Scales of values that evolved and gained acceptance centuries ago have been destroyed, unnecessarily negated and discarded, without the emergence of a new system of values, or without the acceptance, by society's collectives, of the proposed new scale of values.

Besides the value components of political culture, primarily the values of the work ethic have been the victims of the destruction of institutionalized values.

The disorders in the continuity of political values were accompanied by the undermining of national and historical consciousness, which destroyed also the historically sound and cherishable elements of national and historical consciousness, and of political values.

The political leadership in the 1950's was successful in its efforts to completely discredit the elements of consciousness and political values. Real society-integrating and collective-forming values were also dismantled, without our society's acceptance and validation of the advanced new scale of values. Consider the political values imposed during socialism's initial stage, such as party loyalty above all, the complete politicalization of the private sphere, the helplessness of public life, the absolutized seeking of enemies and the constant vigilance, the humiliating pressure to exercise self-criticism, the principle that the end justifies the means, the thinking in terms of absolutely right and absolutely wrong as simplifying value categories. Furthermore, the atrophying and dissolution of political collectives, or the suppression of collective initiatives, that could have validated and confirmed the truly positive and socialist values, and could have gained their acceptance by individuals.

To summarize: It can be established that the underlying causes of political-value disorders are usually social, economic and political disorders, tensions and serious

problems that far exceed the realm of values, but manifest themselves in it as well. The effects of the social problems causing the value disorders reinforce one another and are, to a certain extent, interdependent. To end the value disorders, it is necessary to resolve the tensions and contradictions that underlie the realm of values.

Program

I. Reform and Political Values

Every reform movement is committed to values, and a democratic reform movement must be committed to democratic political values. Choosing socialism is a choice of values, and at the same time it is also the complete or partial rejection of a social order that is based on a different system of values. The acceptance of democratic socialism is likewise a choice of values, and at the same time it is also the rejection of nondemocratic socialism.

An unfolding reform movement that wants to achieve democratic socialism cannot avoid clarifying the fundamental political values that determine its reform program.

It is necessary to clarify at the same time also the negative values and nonvalues that must be abandoned and rejected, because they are incompatible with a democratic political system, and hence with real socialism as well.

In addition to announcing its political program and practical political objectives, it is also a basic duty and task of every political movement claiming an historical mission to clarify and define its fundamental political values. The formulation of values and professed commitment to them are an important task in presenting a program.

Except for announcing a few practical political principles that represented a positive change or a turnaround at the given time, the MSZMP's political and ideological leadership is guilty of a serious omission: its failure to clarify its political values, for which it is not even approximately accountable. Practical political principles of the "Anyone not against us is with us" type have lost by now their behavior-influencing effect. But the values that rise above the organizing principles of everyday political practice, and which determine the political system in historical perspectives, have not been clarified and formulated in a political program. Everyday political practice is governed not by values and principles, but by day-to-day political stratagems and bureaucratic "outlooks on life" that seem successful in practice.

By failing to clarify the acceptance and validation of the formulated political values, the identification with them, and hence their system-stabilizing effect that is independent of organizational and personnel changes, the political leadership relinquishes one of the most important system-stabilizing mechanisms and foundations of its own legitimation.

Regardless of how complicated this may be, we cannot dispense with clarifying in advance the fundamental political values and certain theoretical relationships.

We have to start out from the fact that the range of politically relevant values is broader than the political sphere's fundamental values. The scale of political values comprises first of all the fundamental values of entire society, of the given social formation. Thus the fundamental values of socialism as a social formation are: dominant public ownership of the means of production; the leading role of the working classes and strata; a society free of the exploitation that is based on private ownership and the alienated political bureaucracy's power; socialist humanism; collectivism; social equality, etc. These social-formation-specific values, too, are politically formulated and advanced values, and are therefore a part of the political scale of values. Some of them apply explicitly to the political sphere, but others exceed it. The political scale of values—i.e., the politically formulated and advanced scale of social values—permeates and determines the essence of the fundamental values in the respective value spheres of the individual (economic, political, cultural, educational, etc.) social subsystems.

The values associated with the political system function as a part of society's political culture, as a system of special value categories objectified within the political system's framework.

Political values in the narrower sense can be derived from the politically formulated and advanced fundamental social values. In the political sphere's system of values there are, of course, values that were accepted and validated by earlier generations and have become historically permanent values (e.g., the sanctity of human life, respect of the individual's dignity, freedom, etc.); and there are also new values that have been formulated and have become the objectified values of a given social subsystem, and are typical only of the given social formation.

Relatively separate value spheres are associated with the individual social subsystems. There is, of course, mutual influence and linkage between the value spheres and fundamental values of the economic, political, cultural, educational, etc. social subsystems. One of the yardsticks for measuring the degree of a society's development is the extent to which the unique value systems of the individual social subsystems are separate and differentiated in their evolution and assertion. The politically formulated and advanced social values and political

values in the narrower sense play the primary, dominant and determining role among the value spheres of political-system-centered socialist societies. One way this determining role asserted itself, also in our country, is that the formulated and advanced political values supplanted almost completely the unique values of the individual social subsystems. In the economic sphere, for example, the values of entrepreneurship, profit, competition, trustworthiness and reliability in business and the marketplace, etc. The nonesthetic values of rallying, effective propaganda, denunciation, etc. replaced the artistic and esthetic values. Another way the primacy of the formulated political values asserted itself is that unchallengeable political formulations and interpretations determined the value essence of certain special value categories (nice-ugly, useful-harmful, just-unjust, moral-immoral, democracy-dictatorship, freedom-despotism, etc.). The value categories' essence defined in this manner often caused complete relativism, loss and confusion of values, because the ugliest and most repulsive artistic work, for example, was rated esthetically the most valuable, while truly valuable artistic works were labeled with the negative value judgment of "ugliness." On the basis of its fundamental values, socialist society is a public-spirited, collective society. In its everyday practice, however, the system of institutions branded the citizens' self-organizing collectives and collective movements as anticollective and against the common interest. Complete resignation, the acceptance of helplessness, and the surrendering of personal autonomy became the "adequate" essence and normative requirement of such value categories as the sanctity of human life, guaranteed freedom, and respect for human dignity.

The complete politicization and relativization of the value categories' essence, and even the filling of the positive value categories' essence with negative normative requirements, led to societywide value disorders, the relativization of values, and to making the politically formulated value system nonfunctional, unable to perform its functions. Having become nonfunctional (by losing its behavior-influencing role, and ceasing to provide standards as the basis of accountability and for regulating the quality of life), the system of values still "hovered" over society's everyday life as a "dead" system of norms, objectives and values, but gradually it was dismantled. After this dismantling, however, there followed no clear and unambiguous formulation of a new scale of values, especially of ones that evolve on the basis of consensus, through their validation and confirmation by collectives. Instead, the values of past eras "crept back" unnoticed; values that had been damned earlier were "rehabilitated"; and, mainly in the private sphere, success-oriented outlooks on life, simplified value remnants, and antisocial and anticommunal patterns of behavior "invaded" the realm of values.

In the course of this process of historical transformation in the realm of values, the system and categories of political values became relativized and distorted the most, compounding the earlier distortions and intensifying the fear of office, the mentality of expecting everything from above and turning away from politics, and belief in the benevolent political leader's care, instead of civic courage "to finally take over control of our own destiny."

The realm of political values did not just become void, a mass of theses that had lost their functions. It was dismantled, and it practically ceased to exist. It was often replaced by overgeneralizing opinions loaded with the most primitive prejudices and passions, or by cynically professed "outlooks on life." The historical distortion of society's political scale of values stemmed from the distortion of the scale of values that the political power structure and the political elite formulated. The doubling of the political leadership's scale of values, into one that it proclaimed and the other to which it actually conformed, was just the final push in the destruction of political values.

Is it possible to develop and firmly establish a political scale of democratic and socialist values that ties in with socialist society's system of values? It certainly is. But while values and their systems can be destroyed very quickly, it is a very slow process to develop and validate new ones. According to society's laws governing the objectification and functioning of values, a political scale of socialist values of the new type can develop and become firmly established as actually functioning social objectification, an organic part of everyday political culture, only as the result of a long historical process, within the framework of real political collectives engaging in politics on the basis of democratic reforms.

This process of social objectification is spontaneous in many respects, but it can also be prudently controlled and accelerated in many respects. It raises many questions that have to be clarified, in advance or as they arise.

The most important theoretical questions concerning political values are as follows:

1. Actually which values are socialist society's fundamental political values (identifying at the same time also the negative values against whose assertion institutional safeguards are necessary)?

2. Is the political leadership formulating and asserting these values?

3. Have the institutional safeguards been developed to promote the assertion of the political values (and to prevent the assertion of negative values)?

4. Which political values, actually upheld and asserted in society's political collectives, aid or perhaps prevent the everyday assertion of democratic political values?

The Functions of Political Values

The functions of the formulated political values that have been accepted and validated by a significant majority within society are as follows:

1. The political values determine the behavior of political leaders, apparatus members, and of individuals and collectives engaged in politics, and also influence their decisions, politically relevant choices, and entire political activity.

2. The political values serve as standards of comparison. When judging and evaluating the political behavior of political leaders, apparatus members and citizens, political values and value-determined political norms serve as standards, the basis of political accountability.

3. The actually asserted values determine the quality of everyday life. Dictatorship and democracy are not only different power mechanisms, but different qualities of life as well.

4. Political values are instruments of society's political integration and the political system's legitimation.

Political values function as the political system's integrating elements and system-specific organizing principles.

The principal stages in the assertion of political values are: (1) formulation of the political values as theses; (2) their validation and acceptance by society's political collectives; and (3) exercise of their functions in judging and evaluating the entire political system, evaluating the politically relevant behavior of individuals, and enforcing value-based political accountability.

Every political leadership and collective have their fundamental, primary values, standardized normative requirements. Together with the other (secondary, derived) values, they form a coherent (or at least mostly coherent) system.

The value systems of societies are basically linked to social formations—i.e., they are formation-specific—and they are also arranged in a hierarchy. For example, socialism preserves the preceding society's primary values, but only as secondary or tertiary values, and with a formation-specific essence.

Naturally, the value systems of societies are interminably heterogeneous, due to the existence of many different social groups, strata and collectives. A collective's basic characteristic feature is that it has a relatively separate system of values and norms. The realm of values of the different ethnic, religious, age, political and ideological groups may range from antagonistic and irreconcilable differences to only relatively distinct, mutually complementary or mutually indifferent differences.

But we are apt to find differences in the value system of any collective—the more so when we examine its secondary or tertiary derived values. These differences do not upset the system's fundamental coherence, but are definitely contradictory elements nonetheless.

Positive and Negative Values

Values can always be defined in pairs with their opposites or negative values. They can be identified and described as pairs comprising a positive and a negative value category.

In the realm of political values, the most important positive-negative value pairs are as follows: freedom-despotism, equality-inequality, democracy-dictatorship, humanism-inhumanity, peace-war, limited and controlled power-absolute power, separation-concentration of power, freedom of the press-censorship, tolerance of diversity-monolithism, open-secret politics, security-unpredictability, active public life-political indifference, self-government as opposed to absolute central authority, personal-institutional dependence, legality-legal nihilism, participation-indifference, openness-dogmatism, collectivism-individualism, etc.

The essence of a positive value can truly be understood only together with its negative value, and the two as a pair offer guidance when it comes to making a choice or decision. Pairing the wrong opposites creates very many misunderstandings. For example, centralization is often contrasted with self-government, whereas the opposite of centralization is decentralization, rather than self-government. And neither one is a value; both are principles of organizing the power structure. The combination of centralization and decentralization, their balanced unity, has a power-stabilizing role. But too much of either distorts the power structure.

Self-government, by contrast, is a real value of the political sphere. As methods of organizing the power structure, centralization and decentralization can be blended and practiced in a particular way within the framework of self-government. The positive value of self-government is paired with the abolition of local government as its negative value. Under socialism, centralization has become a value, a case of value distortion: a principle and method of organizing the power structure has been formulated and advanced as a value. Democratic centralism is a method of party organization that has undergone a value distortion and organizational distortion in the course of the communist parties' history. On the one hand, centralization as an organizing principle has become excessive, as a result of abolishing the principle of decentralization and its centralization-limiting role. On the other hand, centralization and a centralized power structure have themselves become values: something that has to be preserved at all cost, the most precious treasure of power, the sole guaranty of

effectiveness. While democracy, a real value, has been demoted to a method, an organizing principle, a style; hence it may be restricted, expanded or shaped.

According to this conception, democracy is not an essential value, and therefore its violation or abolition does not really alter the nature of power, respectively the party's operation. Centralization, however, is an indisputable "value" and all-pervasive characteristic of the power structure; questioning it would mean questioning the nature, essence and inherent character of power and is therefore unacceptable.

The correct pairing of a value with its negative value not only provides guidance and help in choosing behavior conforming to the given value, and in judging the actions of others. It also enhances the proper elaboration and establishment of a system of institutions, procedures, organizational solutions, and of a system of rights and obligations corresponding to the chosen scale of values. If we regard, say, the separation of power, with its mutual checks and balances, as an important democratic value, then it is necessary to prevent institutionally— through the organizational structure and methods of procedure, and by elaborating a system of rights and obligations—the development of power concentration, the negative value with which the preceding positive value is paired. Thus it is not enough to institutionalize a value and to enhance its assertion, through procedures and organizational solutions, and by safeguarding rights and defining obligations. It is at least equally important to institutionally prevent the assertion of the negative value with which the given value is paired.

Democratic Socialism's Fundamental Political Values

The political values that determine the political system's reform, and which must be institutionalized as legal principles, legal institutions, organizational solutions and procedures, are as follows:

1. Freedom
2. Equality
3. Democracy
4. Justice
5. Humanistic policies
6. Peace

Democratic socialism's fundamental political values are the values proclaimed in the democratic reform movement's political program. These values must permeate the essence of the reform movement (as a set of instruments) and of the political system that is to be achieved (the objective).

Within the reform movement and in the political system that is to be achieved, the fundamental (primary) and their derived (secondary) political values must: (1) perform a fundamental behavior-determining function, in

determining the behavior and influencing the preferences of decisionmaking and alternative-choosing persons; (2) serve as standards for judging the political leaders' and the citizens' behavior, and in the final outcome the entire political system; (3) permeate everyday political life and determine its quality; and (4) function as instruments of the political system's integration and legitimation.

Since values can be defined and interpreted only when paired with their negative value categories, it will be expedient to list these as well:

1. Despotism or tyranny is the negative value category that is the opposite of freedom.
2. Social and political inequality is the opposite of equality.
3. Dictatorship is the opposite of democracy.
4. Injustice is the opposite of justice.
5. Inhuman policies are the opposite of humanism.
6. War is the opposite of peace.

Of course, it is not enough just to name the pairs of positive and negative value categories. It is at least as important to interpret, break down, and define their essence, as precisely as possible.

I. Political Freedom

Freedom is the oldest and most fundamental requirement of man as a social being, a value category that functions in every (economic, political, cultural, educational, ethnic, international power, etc.) dimension of society's life. Historically, the value of freedom was first formulated as a requirement directed against the defenselessness and humiliating subordination in the everyday "small circles of oppression." Subsequently freedom became a fundamental value, the opposite of oppression by institutionalized local and central power, of absolutized central power's despotism. But political freedom was also formulated historically as a fundamental political value, the opposite of egalitarian collective dictatorship and of the modern party-state bureaucracy's omnipotence.

The circle of political freedom's subjects broadened historically: besides personal freedom, there appeared also the freedom of collectives, and then the demands for the freedom of civic organizations and of states.

Political freedom must be guaranteed in the relations of political freedom's subjects, mutually and in every direction. The universal guaranteeing and assertion of political freedom, within the complicated system of relations among political freedom's subjects, presupposes a system of differentiated and mutually balanced political rights and obligations.

The most important directions of relations for which political freedom must be guaranteed are: (a) interpersonal relations; (b) relations between individuals and

their collectives; (c) mutual relations between political collectives; (d) relations between individuals and political collectives on the one hand, and the institutionalized (local and central) organizations of power, on the other; (e) relations between individuals and political collectives on the one hand, and their own or other political organizations (parties, associations, movements, etc.) on the other hand; (f) relations between the political organizations and the institutionalized organizations of power; and (g) relations between states.

Political freedom in each and every one of these directions must be guaranteed within the framework of a normative system of rights and obligations.

Within the framework of a system of human and civil rights, political freedom must be guaranteed in all possible directions of relations that can come into consideration, and the only possible constraint on it is respect for the political freedom of others. Strong and enforceable legal and organizational safeguards have to be devised to prevent the opposite of political freedom: despotism, oppression, defenselessness, and the abuse of power.

II. Equality

In addition to freedom, equality is another fundamental value of a democratic political system. Equality must be a fundamental value of also socialist society's political system, retaining in part the historically evolved value components of equality, and in part giving it a new essence.

We have to start out from the complex system of social equality when building democratic socialism, bearing in mind that the individual dimensions of equality within this complex system are not of equal value.

The equality attained later in history provides the real validation and enforcement of earlier equality values. The citizens' equality before the law (and the courts), their equal political rights, the equality of religions and denominations, cultural equality, and national equality were fundamental values of the bourgeois transformation, and they remained fundamental values of the bourgeois democracies as well. But these equality values apply within the framework of a bourgeois-type value of economic equality, determined by equality and freedom to own and enjoy private property.

Socialism's ideal of equality likewise maintains the primacy of economic equality (even absolutizing it in a certain sense). But not as equality to own and enjoy private property. Rather, through the positive abolition of private ownership, within the framework of equal exclusion from the differentiated and unequal ownership of the means of production, and their equal placement under public ownership.

In comparison with the other equality values in the complex system of social equality, Marxism's ideal of economic equality plays the primary, dominant role.

The equality values in the complex system of social equality are: (1) economic equality in owning property; (2) the citizens' political equality; (3) their equality before the law (and the courts); (4) cultural equality; (5) educational equal opportunity; (6) national and ethnic equality; (7) the equality of religions and denominations; and (8) the equality of states.

By nature every equality value has a political essence and is of decisive importance in determining the quality of political power. The relatively differentiated equality values within the complex system of social equality are interdependent, and they mutually reinforce and permeate one another. Even up to now under socialism, the diminished significance of the value of equality before the law, and the absence of legal institutions and legal safeguards to ensure its enforcement, have made the enforcement of political equality and the equality of ownership impossible; and the lack and combined shortcomings of all this have led to cultural, educational and national inequalities. Consistent enforcement of the values of political equality and equality before the law is a prerequisite for enforcing cultural, educational, national and interstate equality.

The freedom of the political collectives, strata and organizations, and a democratic system of exercising power can ensure assertion of economic equality of ownership that has been declared politically as one of socialism's fundamental values. A democratic system of exercising power, democratic direction and control of society's reproduction and distribution processes can be achieved under an interdependent, mutually limiting and harmonizing system of the values of freedom and equality.

The subjects of the value of political equality (just as those of political freedom) are individuals, collectives, organizations, political movements, and the state.

The relations of political equality comprise the relations between its subjects. Legal institutions, organizational institutions and methods, and operating principles must ensure enforcement of the value of equality in all of the following relations:

- Interpersonal relations;
- Relations between collectives;
- Relations between organizations;
- Relations between political movements;
- Relations between individuals, collectives, and organizations on the one hand, and state organizations on the other;
- Interstate relations.

The essence of political equality in the narrower sense may be summed up in essence as the equal right of citizens, their collectives, and of political movements

and organizations, to engage in politics, to articulate and represent their interests, to influence political decisions, and thereby to participate equally in exercising power.

The equality of political freedom must provide equal opportunity to participate in exercising political power. Which of course does not mean that the interests of the individual strata, groups and collectives carry equal social weight. Ultimately, however, the question of what the social weight or significance of the interests of some stratum, group or collective is must be decided before democratic forums, by taking advantage of the free and equal opportunity that democracy provides to engage in politics.

Enforcement of the value of equality does not make the interests of the groups and strata equal, but it does give them equal opportunity to promote their interests. At the same time, equality does not create uniformity in an interest- and opinion-segmented society. Rather, the political collectives, strata and groups that are differentiated on the basis of their interests, political opinions and scales of values, enjoy the equality-given right to preserve their distinctiveness.

Political equality's safeguards include protection of the majority's and the minority's rights. These rights and obligations must be defined so that the minority may become the majority, and the majority the minority, in the democratic process of asserting political wills. Protection of the majority's rights is essential to enforcing the majority's will, and to implementing the adopted decision uniformly and effectively. Protection of the minority's rights (recognition of the minority's right to adhere to its minority opinion and to argue in its defense, while the democratically expressed majority will is implemented uniformly) is essential to make the historically necessary corrections, to undertake the timely review of the majority standpoint that was once correct, to promote the unfolding of political creativity, and to step up political activity. Exaggeration or absolutization of the rights of either side, those of the majority or minority, will lead to the same undesirable result. The assertion of the majority's power over everyone, without safeguarding the minority opinion, will gradually make every minority view insignificant and will perpetuate the rule of a minority acting in the name of a conformist "organized" majority. Absolutization of the majority opinion is certain to lead to rule by some minority, behind the "fig leaf" of an organized majority opinion, as also our history has demonstrated. When the majority uses its absolute power to steamroller the minority, fear of remaining in a minority develops, especially when this involves disgrace, condemnation, the humiliating retraction of earlier views, and loss of office. Most people in this case will seek the "expected" majority standpoint—the standpoint presented as the majority standpoint, by the minority that happens to be in power—and align themselves with it, fearing that otherwise they would remain in a minority. It must be emphasized, however, that the minority's right to adhere to its own opinion

does not extend to questioning implementation, to sabotaging uniform implementation, or to carrying out in perfunctory manner the decided political actions. This would render impossible effective action by any political organization or collective, as well as uniform implementation.

The relationship and system of mutual safeguards between the majority and minority (or possibly several distinct minorities) contain in condensed form the most important elements of democracy: self-government based on political equality and freedom, the exercise of power through debate and reasoning, and a power mechanism that preserves diversity and continually integrates a new unity from it. A democratic system of exercising power ensures the inclusion of minorities in it, even when their obligation to maintain democratic order and discipline forces them to carry out the majority's will, with which they are not in agreement. The assertion of the majority's power must be supplemented and limited by protecting the minorities.

III. Democracy as a Political Value

Democratic exercise of power—as opposed to despotism or organizational and personal tyranny and dictatorship—is a fundamental value of socialist society's political system.

Dictatorship and democracy are mutually exclusive categories and meanings in terms of exercising power. The political system's positive value is democracy, and its negative value is dictatorship. Conforming to the practice during Stalin's despotism, the theoretical and political literature that cited Lenin as its authority became essentially the apologetics of dictatorship, exalting the negative value of dictatorship and emphasizing it initially in the "revolutionary democratic dictatorship" formulation that also Lenin had used, and then in the "dictatorship of the proletariat" formulation. Dictatorial despotism actually abolished all democratic institutions in the Soviet Union at that time, and later in the socialist countries as well. Democracy remained in the vocabulary of political writings and speeches, as a method, a style of leadership, an empty phrase and superfluous flourish.

However, "democratic dictatorship" and "dictatorial democracy" are inexplicable and unverifiable also theoretically. Both democracy and dictatorship denote specific types of regime, systems of exercising power, but they are mutually exclusive categories with mutually exclusive essential attributes. Usually the strong and effective dictatorship was contrasted with tinkering and long-winded democracy that led to disorder and anarchy. But that was in fact merely the caricature of democracy, drawn by the "philosophies of the will," the political doctrines aspiring to rule by a "strong, select minority."

Both dictatorship and democracy are specific types of regime, systems of institutionalized power, with subordination-superordination and strict accountability, but they differ in their essence and nature.

Democracy's order, discipline and accountability (we could call it also coercion) are strict, consistent and stable.

A democratic system cannot be mixed with dictatorial despotism's elements of discipline, tyranny and subordination-superordination (because then it would cease to be democratic). Just as dictatorship does not tolerate (or tolerates with great reluctance, and only temporarily) the formation and operation of "small circles of democracy and freedom."

In the course of institutionalizing a democratic regime, strong safeguards must be developed to prevent the rise of personal or organizational dictatorship. The socialist political system's two principal values, political freedom and equality, and also its derived values repudiate a dictatorial regime in every respect. The main task is not only to institutionalize democracy as a political value, but also to institutionally prevent the rise of one or more dictatorships, and to provide safeguards against the possibility of wielding exclusive (personal or organizational) power. Democracy exists only as an historically evolved, particular and specific regime, but it also has its universally valid value and institutional components.

In the present stage of our development we can sum up democracy's historically specific essence in the following requirements: we may speak of democracy's assertion when differences of interest and political opinion that arise on the basis of socialist social relations, and which are therefore socialist in their essence, may be articulated within society's political system; and when the interest-determined political wills, mediated by the political collectives and bodies, are able to participate in preparing, making and implementing decisions, and in overseeing these three stages.

To be able to achieve democracy as the positive-value essence of exercising power, it is necessary to respectively fulfill, create and provide certain closely interrelated preconditions, safeguards, and a set of organizational instruments.

Democracy's Preconditions

Socialist democracy's precondition is actually a system of democracy's two fundamental values, freedom and equality, objectified in legal normatives, and in organizational, procedural and operating principles and institutions.

a. It is necessary to guarantee the political security and freedom of individuals and collectives in their relations with other individuals and collectives, respectively with the organizations of political power. A system of civil

rights can guarantee this political security and freedom. Development of the system of civil rights is a continual task. On the one hand, it is a precondition for democracy; and on the other hand, it is also an instrument of realizing the value of freedom.

b. Democracy's other precondition is that the political equality of individuals and collectives has to be guaranteed. By political equality we mean that every individual and collective may adhere without prejudice to his or its political opinion, and may freely strive to assert his or its interest-determined political will.

Democracy's Set of Instruments

The main difference between democracy's preconditions (i.e., the system of legal-normative and procedural institutions that ensure the specific and actual assertion of the values of freedom and equality) and its set of instruments is as follows: Since the preconditions of democracy are expressed primarily in legal-normative institutions, once established they constitute an aggregate of relatively stable and historically less variable institutions; whereas constant change, constant adjustment to the changing socioeconomic conditions, is the natural state of democracy's set of instruments.

a. Within democracy's set of instruments it is necessary to ensure first of all the development of a system of organizations capable of bringing to the surface and articulating politically the interests that actually exist within society, and which determine the political opinions and wills. The system of political organizations must adapt dynamically to: (1) the system of interests that actually exist within society, differ in their significance and vary in their essence; and (2) the system of values that is constantly changing over time.

b. Democracy's second indispensable and essential instrument is a suitable system of political oversight. Political oversight must extend basically to the three stages of exercising power: (1) the preparation of decisions; (2) decisionmaking or, in other words, the decision-influencing role of the individuals, groups and institutions participating in the decisionmaking process, its rules of order; and finally (3) the implementation of the decisions. Without political openness and oversight, the relations of accountability and power are inscrutable to society, and it is unable to control them.

c. The third component of democracy's set of instruments is guaranteed equal and complete access to politically relevant information. Briefly stated, we need a system of democratic and publicly accountable mass media, and freedom of the press. The values of freedom, equality and democracy are interdependent, and able to assert themselves only when they permeate one another. A system of institutions guaranteeing the assertion of the values of freedom and equality is a prerequisite for the assertion of the value of democracy. At the same time, democracy's institutionalized system of exercising power

is a prerequisite for the assertion of the values of freedom and equality. The joint assertion of the values of freedom, equality and democracy can be ensured only through a system of institutions that mutually reinforce and guarantee the effectiveness of these values. At the same time, they mutually constrain one another's effectiveness, preventing any one of them from becoming "excessive."

Democracy is simultaneously both a value essence, and an adequate formal system of institutions for the assertion of the values of freedom and equality. And the essential value attributes of freedom and equality, together with their institutionalized system, constitute an adequate formal system of exercising power democratically.

IV. Justice as a Political Value

Justice is an abstract value category that exists only as a value associated with some specific sphere of society's existence. Thus justice has no universal essence. There respectively exist only the specific categories of legal, political, and moral justice and injustice.

Political justice is a special value relationship in which the object of assessment is the political system as a whole; and the result of assessment is the political system's legitimation, validation and acceptance, respectively the exact opposite. The base or standard for assessing political justice is itself chosen or preferred consciously, on the basis of assessment. In the case of socialism's political system, the base or standard for assessing its justice is a democratic regime founded on the assertion of the values of freedom and equality.

To determine the political system's "justice," correctness and value, we have to break down slightly the standard that we are using as our yardstick.

We have to distinguish at least three standards for assessing the political system's "justice": (a) the values and their essential attributes that the political leadership formulates and proclaims in its program; (b) the essential attributes of the values that actually apply in the course of exercising power; and (c) the legal and moral values that are closely interlinked with the political values, and thus with the values of political justice.

In themselves, of course, the essential attributes of the values that the political leadership formulates and proclaims are not enough to assess the political system's justice; at best they are suitable only for assessing the political leadership's intentions. The departure of the actually asserted scale of values from the formulated one, the doubling of the scale of values, leads to the development of serious value disorders, both among the members of society and among the power elite.

Naturally, society validates (assesses as just or unjust) the existing political system primarily on the basis of the scale of values that applies in practice.

Legitimation always means active acceptance. It manifests itself as participation in exercising power and operating the political system, and as a positive value judgment formed in the course of such participation.

The political system's mere existence, survival and toleration, the occasional indifference to it, and sham participation in the rituals of power do not mean the political system's legitimation or its recognition as just. The base and standard for legitimation, then, are not sheer existence, but active acceptance on the basis of specific value considerations, and participation in exercising power that manifests itself in political actions.

Thus legitimation is based on a value judgment of acceptance, and the standard of justice is the regime's democratic nature founded on the assertion of the values of freedom and equality. In addition to the value elements of freedom, equality and democracy, the other standards of justice are the regime's legality, and also the moral constraints on politics, its essential attributes of moral justice—or, briefly stated, assertion of the fundamental legal and moral values in the political system.

Without the constraints of moral and legal values, then, power cannot be just to begin with. The moral and legal values are chosen values, of course, and they can be assessed in themselves from the viewpoint of justice. At the same time, the values of morality and legality are also value components of political justice.

V. Humanism as a Value

The essence of humanism as a political value is man-centered politics, the principle that politics must serve man.

The requirement of humanism comprises three elements: the protection, security and development of man's life, his freedom, and dignity. In humanism as a political value, in other words, man himself has been formulated as a value.

Humanism, too, is a composite political value: it includes also secondary value elements, or such elements can be derived from it. For example: protection of human life; protection from physical injury; the right to good health and a healthy living environment; prohibition of torture and the third degree; respect for the person's integrity and privacy; prohibition of willfully causing physical or mental suffering; protection of the family's unity; development of individual abilities; provisions for the talented; support for the disadvantaged, etc.

Political democracy's system of institutions and effective value components guarantee that humanism as a political requirement becomes an effective political value.

VI. Peace as a Political Value

Peace as the opposite of war is a formulated political value that today, when mankind is facing the threat of total annihilation, is essentially mankind's collective right to life, to self-preservation and the preservation of human culture.

Historically, the individual's right to life developed, through the right of individuals and collectives to live freely, into entire mankind's collective right to life. And that right can be guaranteed only in peace.

War has always been the main threat to human life and freedom, but the threat of complete annihilation is a horror peculiar to our time. Only the democratic political systems collectively (or at least their majority) are able to avoid a world war.

By safeguarding peace as a value, the democratic political systems are renouncing neither their right to self-defense, nor their right to violently crush the forces threatening democracy, and to aid—with arms, if necessary—the fighters for democracy.

Armed struggle for liberation is not the antithesis of peace as a political value. But it is a type of armed struggle that leads to world war and could result in mankind's annihilation.

The preservation of peace as a value cannot be achieved solely on the level of international relations. Domestic political systems determine and condition international political relations. Therefore internal democratization of the individual countries' political systems provides the main guaranties for securing peace.

The collective of democratic, just and humane political systems operating on the principles of equality and freedom, provides sufficient guaranties to preserve world peace and, as a part of world peace, the life and culture of mankind. In this sense world peace depends on the domestic essence and nature of the individual countries' political systems. Beyond a certain point and from the viewpoint of mankind's survival, therefore, the efforts to preserve peace become interactions of the individual countries' political systems, mankind's universal cause. It is mankind's internationalist collective right to condemn the domestic regimes of countries that are threatening to unleash war.

Each war in the past threatened only the two warring countries or peoples, and at most the lives of the peoples inhabiting a single continent. Today a world war is a threat to entire mankind. Therefore the preservation of world peace is a value of fundamental importance to entire mankind, especially when the circle of powers and national leaders able to make decisions in these matters has narrowed considerably.

Derived Values Guaranteeing the Fundamental Political Values

A system of so-called derived (secondary) political values, elements and proclaimed goals, all of which lend themselves to more specific formulation more readily, can guarantee assertion of the fundamental (primary) values.

The safeguards of political freedom, equality and democracy can be summed up essentially in the system of institutionalized human and civil rights. The derived political values that guarantee assertion of socialist democracy as a fundamental political value, for example, are as follows:

1. Freedom to participate in political life means that individuals, collectives and organizations are free to participate in exercising political power, particularly in shaping decisions.

2. The replaceability of leaders, top officials and representatives is a freedom that the principle of rotation, and its supporting system of legal institutions and organizational and procedural methods are intended to guarantee. The possibility of replacing through succession the incumbents in positions of power, and the filling of such positions within the framework of an open race for office are the political value of societywide participation in public life and in exercising power collectively, as well as one of the safeguards against the institutionalization of personal power.

3. Politics exposed to public view, and political openness unrestricted in its functions are value components of political freedom. Politics behind closed doors, and bureaucratic openness deprive citizens of the value of information, condemning society's members and collectives to political tutelage, intellectual dependence, and to the "paternalistic" care of the "provident and omniscient" regime. The citizen's freedom of information, and the obligation of the organs of political power to supply information are prerequisites for a well-informed public, and also a guaranty of participation in political decisionmaking.

However, freedom of information and the obligation to provide information must be accompanied by guaranteed "freedom of assembly of ideas" (Geza Paskandi), opportunity to use also alternative sources of information. Politics exposed to public view can be imagined only by making use of the institutions of public openness (the press, radio, television, meetings, etc.).

4. Freedom to organize political collectives, and even assistance in doing so are value components of political freedom and democracy. The distinguished actors in political life are not individuals or society, but the collectives actually engaging in politics. Today, when modern political life and the political collectives have become perhaps too organization centered, there are in part collectives and movements also outside organizations. Restriction of the freedom of assembly and organization actually hampers the emergence of real actors in politics: it isolates individually the potential actors in politics or dissolves them in the masses of huge political organizations.

5. Self-government as a political value is inseparable from the existence of communities. The functioning of communities must be founded on the principle or value of self-government, while self-governments can remain viable and withstand the pressure of central power only if real political communities constitute their base of support. We cannot speak of community existence without the right of self-government, and the political community becomes a factor of (local or central) power through its right of self-government. Self-government does not rule out limited concentration of power within the community, centralization of the spheres of authority to some extent, or the delegation of authority by the community to its elected leaders and bodies. In the system of communities, the authority of each community is limited by the authority of the other self-governing communities and of the regional self-government, and by central power. A loose network of isolated and spiteful self-governments is an extremely disruptive formation that undermines political life. Rather than absolute central power, the proper counterbalancing and supplementing value or principle to avoid this is a system of communities that retain their separation but are linked by their longer-term interests; in other words, a system of communities integrated by their common interests. Such a system is also the basis of strong central power (that restricts to some extent also the self-governments). Since political segmentation is based on the segmentation of interests, and since the latter in its turn presupposes a segmented system of communities, every democratic political system must strive to achieve that the common interests become increasingly evident in the arena of everyday politics; and that, in the course of exercising their decision-influencing function, the communities bring unambiguously to the surface the conflicts of interest that exist among them, as well as their long-term or more abstract common interests on which stable and predictable interest alliances and political consensuses can be based.

6. The separation of power is a safeguard against uncontrollable concentration of power, and against the development of positions of exclusive power occupied by nonremovable incumbents.

Societywide concentration of power and the wielding of exclusive power are inconsistent with society's interminable segmentation into interest groups and strata, with the collective exercise of power, and with the communities' right to self-government. Over and above this, however, societywide concentration of power and the wielding of exclusive power are inconsistent with, or hamper the assertion of, essentially all values of political freedom and democracy (including also freedom of public ownership as a value).

Societywide concentration of power ends the horizontal segmentation of power and the horizontal organization of autonomy, as well as the independence of the individual power components and spheres of influence. And vertically, too, it "suctions off" and concentrates local power. In the "small circles" of the power hierarchy and at its levels, societywide power concentration and the wielding of exclusive power create, around an individual or organization, power systems similar in their content and nature. The separation of power among individuals and local bodies, or among local authorities, cannot be achieved until the decisive "dominant element's" (central power's) concentration and exclusive exercise of power have been relaxed.

The unity of power, of course, must not be confused with the concentration of power and the wielding of exclusive power. The unity of power, as any unity, can only be the unity of diversity, i.e., the political consensus of the strata, organizations and collectives that democratically form a political alliance, based on their interests. Political unity can be founded only on a political alliance, on a power alliance of the actors in political life, on a complicated system of mutual checks and balances, and control channels. Power of the alliance cannot be imagined without abandoning claim to wielding exclusive power. Even independently of an alliance's system of supreme power, however, the separation of power, the complicated system of mutual checks and balances, is one of the political system's value components, at both the local and central levels of power, as well as in every sphere of political public life.

Strong power is not the same thing as concentrated and exclusive power. The strength and effectiveness of concentrated exceptional power make themselves felt in emergency situations and tasks. In society's normal historical stages, however, such power is extremely unstable, and its effectiveness is low.

7. Political pluralism, or the toleration of diversity, is yet another value of the political system.

Society's life has an interminably segmented and plural structure, in all its dimensions. Society's pluralism increases, rather than diminishes, with the differentiation of man's and society's existence. Society's pluralism manifests itself in the diversity of (economic, political, stratum, group, national and ethnic, religious, territorial, etc.) interests and views. The more segmented and

pluralistic a given society—i.e., the more relatively different groups, strata, collectives and ethnic groups constitute the given society—the richer and "more valuable" it becomes. A society segmented on the basis of diversity also has a greater capacity to learn, adapt and renew itself, especially when the society's diversity is institutionalized as the diversity of power-influencing and decision-forming factors.

The opposite of pluralism as a political value is monolithism, the intolerant rejection of different interests, views and opinions, ethnic groups, cultural and religious practices, etc. and limitation of their existence. Imposed monolithism results in forced uniformity, the pauperization and destruction of fundamental personal and group values.

8. Political security and reliability are exceptionally important values of the political system. The essence of political security is that the behavior of the participants in politics, and the consequences of their behavior, must be predictable in all the relationships among the subjects of political life.

Historically, individuals and political collectives first sought guaranties of security against local power and central power. Primarily this dimension of political security is threatened even today, but there is growing demand for security also on the part of central power and states.

The value components of political security also include democratic order, the requirements of maintaining law and order, and discipline. The democratic legal system, and the positive personality components of democratic political culture guarantee these requirements.

9. Political solidarity, as the element of espousing the causes of others, assuming collective responsibility, uniting, and engaging in politics collectively, is another value of the political sphere. Its opposite is dissension, individualism, separation and withdrawal, at the individual, collective or community level, and at the level of parties and states as well.

10. Ever since socialist ideals evolved, collectivism and commitment to the collective have been recognized principles of socialism's political system. The most dangerous opposites of these values are exaggerated individualism, and "collective terror" (by a collective or invoking collectivism), the organizational despotism that eliminates all personal aspects.

11. The creation and preservation of political power's stability are a fundamental aspiration of every political leadership, and of every broader political collective as well.

A given political leadership usually measures the political system's stability in terms of the stability of its own rule. This is a serious value disorder; moreover, it may lead to serious disorders of the power mechanism as well.

Obviously, political stability as a value is not independent of the political leadership and its composition. But it cannot be equated with the constancy of the political leadership or with holding onto positions of power, either. The stability of democratic political systems can be measured in terms of the stability of their values, principles, power structure and institutions, and of their social legitimation as well. Changing leaders, cabinets, officeholders, ruling parties, etc., and the emergence of ever-newer political movements are manifestations of the political system's stability through changes, provided these changes do not affect the system's basic structure, values, etc. Protecting the political system's stability, therefore, means protecting its principles, institutionalized power-exercising procedures power and systems of engaging in politics, rather than entrenching individuals, political leaders, in their positions of power.

Such institutionalizations to consolidate personal power are the concomitants of every change of leaders or leadership, and especially of efforts to hang onto leadership positions. If this is not prevented by means of institutionalized democratic safeguards (specifically with the value-safeguarding instruments listed earlier), then the political system's stability and legitimation will decline in inverse proportion with the increasing power of the leader or leaders, and with the growing consolidation of their positions of power.

12. The derived values of political freedom and democracy include also certain personality traits or values that may be lumped together as the elements of democratic political culture.

The functioning of a democratic power structure can be imagined only with the active participation of individuals and collectives familiar with the system and able to make it work. The personality traits of democratic political culture can become widespread in the process of political socialization, within the framework of everyday politics and public life. Democratic political institutions enhance the spreading of desirable personality traits and political skills. Public activity within political collectives and groups is the main terrain for political socialization.

In societies lacking collectives, also their political cultures become distorted, and the adequate skills, values and personality components of democratic politics are relegated to the background.

The components of democratic political culture include such personality traits as adherence to principles in politics, an open mind, flexibility, broad tolerance, open

espousal of causes, a sense of responsibility, moderation in enforcing principles and ideals, trust, frankness, empathy, and impartiality, to mention only the most important ones.

Democratic institutions and a long historical learning process are necessary for these values to govern society's political life.

13. An eminent value of the political sphere is independence, i.e., autonomy and sovereignty. Both these mutually related values are requirements associated with the subjects of politics: individuals, collectives, organizations, states and nations.

Autonomy is not the same as self-government, although we cannot speak of self-government without some measure of autonomy. Self-government as a principle and value of governing, of exercising power, is based on autonomy, but it is something more than just autonomy: a given community's or stratum's internal system of exercising power, applicable to itself. The essence of autonomy is independence, the right to be separate from others.

The essence of the autonomy of individuals, collectives and organizations is their right and opportunity to be separate. This distinctness includes also turning away from politics and public life, making, and the possibility of making, certain spheres of individual and collective existence free of politics. The distinctness of the private spheres of individual and collective existence, confining them to private life, is a value that has often been violated under socialism, due to the expansion of all-pervasive politics.

Personal autonomy is the private sphere's right to protection from becoming politicized. But the autonomy of collectives cannot be entrenched so well in the private sphere, because every collective possesses rudimentary attributes of public life and politics, even the collectives that are not motivated by politics. Political collectives strive to achieve not only autonomy but, beyond it, also internal self-government, the right to manage and regulate their own affairs. And externally they demand, in addition to recognition of their autonomous existence and distinctness, also the right to participate in broader public life and the political sphere, while preserving their self-government and separate existence, their autonomy.

In the case of organizations, ethnic groups, strata and states as well, the category of sovereignty expresses the value of preserving their independence, self-management or self-government, and autonomous existence.

The essence of sovereignty is possession of supreme power, and in recent centuries this has appeared in the form of state sovereignty. The state or certain of its organs possess sovereignty. In view of the evolution of modern political systems and the requirements of democratic regimes, however, I believe that today the possessor of supreme power, the repository of state sovereignty, can be not some state organ (Parliament, soviet, council, etc.), nor even all state organs jointly, among whom supreme power is divided, but only the given country's entire political system: the parties, state organs, the citizens' political organizations and movements, institutionalized political alliances, etc., and through them the citizens collectively.

It is quite meaningless to speak of state sovereignty vested in the political system, especially in the case of party-centric political systems. But it would be a mistake to confuse state sovereignty with party sovereignty, the license of the party as the possessor of supreme power. The party (or multiparty), state and nonstate political organizations must possess supreme power collectively. Collective possession of supreme power ensures that society's members are "elevated" to the rank of subjects of supreme power, which transforms supreme power into "collective political power."

Rather than supreme power in itself, the value is the democratic system of possessing supreme power collectively, as the assertion of the political system's internal sovereignty.

The external aspect of sovereignty, the requirement that the exercise of supreme power by the state must be inviolable, is encountered in international political life. State sovereignty is a fundamental value of the international political system. It is left to international law and international agreements to enforce the inviolability of, and mandatory respect for, state sovereignty.

In international relations, sovereignty is a value and also a precondition for promoting, asserting and reconciling interests internationally. International reconciliation of interests depends on the political system's internal mechanism for bringing interests to the surface, and for promoting and integrating them.

The assertion of sovereignty in international relations depends on how valuable and democratic is the domestic possession of supreme power. Restrictions on the subjects of politics (the collectives, political groups, individuals, etc.), their exclusion from possession of supreme power internally, limit also the external assertion of sovereignty as a political value. Sovereignty as a value of international politics is not an aim in itself. Rather, it is an instrument, and also an essential attribute, of asserting national interests.

Limited collective and democratic possession of supreme power, and its expropriation and exclusive possession by some organization or group of individuals violate sovereignty as a value in the political system's internal relations.

14. Besides distinctness, the preservation of autonomy and the toleration of diversity, also political unity democratically organized from diversity, the political system's consensual (consensus-based) integration, is a value of the political sphere. Unity is always the unity of diversity, the unity of different political collectives, movements and organizations that retain their distinctness but are cooperation oriented. Monolithism is the "unity" of uniformity; a kind of inorganic unity, we might say; in contrast with the organic unity of segmented, heterogeneous and distinct elements.

Organic unity, the unity of differentiated elements and parts, represents more valuable organization of a higher order than monolithic uniformity or inorganic unity does.

The segmentation of interests, its articulation as political segmentation, and the transformation of segmentation into ever-newer segmentation are a normal and interminable concomitant of human society. As a historical trend, segmentation is gaining, and there is nothing to indicate that some sort of unsegmented, monolithic society will eventually evolve. Socialism perceived on this model is not viable.

The political system's task is not only to articulate the segmentation and the social (economic, interest, cultural, ethnic, value, opinion, etc.) differences that determine it, and to present the segmentation as political segmentation, but also to create ever-newer unity from this segmentation, through integration.

The preservation and tolerance of the component's autonomy, the assertion of social pluralism as a value, must proceed hand in hand also with the creation of unity. In politics, the principle of integration is a complementary value of tolerating diversity, just as unity is a complementary value of pluralism.

In democratic socialism's political system the values of diversity, integration and unity can be combined and amalgamated within the framework of an alliance-based hegemonistic power bloc. The negative values of monolithism, exclusive power and its homogenization are elements of a monopolistic power bloc. The monopolization of power rules out the evolution and maintenance of an alliance's power; and, through the exclusive possession of supreme power, monopolization also prevents society's democratic possession of supreme power.

The Harmonization and Coherence of Political Values

The political values formulated in the democratic reform movement constitute a system, within which the fundamental values are the dominant. The system includes also secondary and tertiary values inferred or derived from the fundamental or primary values.

The plurality of political-value systems necessitates choosing among them, by giving conscious preference to one system over the others. The political values of dictatorial socialism radically differ from those of democratic socialism. Acceptance of the democratic or the dictatorial system of values is the outcome of a choice between values.

In the present stage of socialism the political leadership has not clarified its own choice of fundamental political values, and in many instances it has "elevated" negative values to the rank of political values.

Identification with the political values is one of the most important criteria of legitimation, and at the same time it also makes possible the continual "weighing" of the regime, subjecting it to axiological analysis on the basis of its own formulated system of values.

The legitimation disorders in Hungary can be traced to the value system's disorders; and the value disorders, to the internal crises of the system of political power.

The democratic reform movement is founded on a clear and collectively accepted system of values.

The collectively formulated democratic political values constitute a system.

As for the formulated systems of values, they have to meet three requirements: they must be (1) hierarchical, (2) harmonized, and (3) coherent and consistently institutionalized.

The value system's hierarchy is determined by, and evident in, the superposition of fundamental values over the derived secondary and tertiary values, in descending order.

The value categories can be harmonized in the process of institutionalizing the values. Harmonization must avoid allowing the absolutization of some value to prevent the assertion of other values, or allowing the assertion of an absolutized value to lead to the exact opposite of the intended result.

The exaggeration of freedom as a fundamental value or its incorrect interpretation jeopardizes the assertion of equality as a value. Regarding equality as an absolute value and institutionalizing it the wrong way erodes the significance of freedom as a value. But also a system in which the derived values are not harmonized can lead to the distortion of political values. For example, the exaggeration of the principle of local power and self-government, or the complete de-emphasizing of this principle's significance, at the expense of the requirements of unity or political stability. The principle of society's integration must constrain the assertion of pluralism as a value. The requirements of integration and unity, on the other hand, must not lead to monolithism, to forced uniformity. Or, for example, the particular principles, reasons

and -cracies (democracy, technocracy, bureaucracy, logocracy, etc.) that are perceived as the regime's functional components must constitute a harmonized system, respectively a different hierarchical and harmonized system for each social sphere. Actually every primary and secondary value is linked directly or indirectly to the others, and no value is able to assert itself alone.

The requirement of harmonizing values means first of all their hierarchization (or perhaps differentiated hierarchization, by social spheres and levels); and second, their mutual constraint and joint assertion.

Rather than being mutually exclusive, the desirable value categories of democracy mutually constrain, complement and presuppose one another's assertion. The values of freedom, autonomy, independence and self-government have to be constrained, but not sacrificed, on behalf of equality as a value. It is necessary to ensure their harmonized and joint institutionalization and assertion. Majority rule can be reconciled with the protection of minorities without absolutizing either, thus avoiding the undesirable results to which absolutization could lead.

The third requirement that a system must meet is the coherence of its constituent values, in two respects. First, the formulated values must not include incompatible values. The organizing principles of a one-party system and centralization, for instances, are principles and not values. Hence they cannot be elevated to the rank of values because they are incompatible with, and exclude the assertion of, such values as democracy, self-government, autonomy, political freedom, the replaceability of leaders, open politics, etc. To undertake political inequality is incompatible with socialism's value of equality. In the same manner, the individual's complete subordination to an organization, and renunciation of the right to open political criticism, personal autonomy and independence are incompatible with socialism's value of freedom.

The other projection of the coherence of values is their breakdown, objectification and institutionalization. To the fundamental values there must be added sets of consistent, objectified and institutionalized secondary and tertiary derived values to form a system of values, specifically one without gaps.

The norms of political organizations, and legal norms play an eminent role in the consistent and coherent institutionalization of values. On the one hand, the norms of political organizations and the statutory regulations must not contain provisions that would hamper or prevent the assertion of values. And on the other hand, they have to contain provisions that ensure the consistent assertion of values and the exclusion of negative values.

The blanket provisions of statutory regulations (the definitions of what constitutes antistate propaganda, parasitism, or antisocial behavior), the absence of an independent judiciary to try political cases, the excessive rights of the police (to demand identification papers, to search parcels, to require the registration of residents, to seek extension of custody on remand, etc.), measures that restrict freedom of movement at home or travel abroad, too broad classification of official and state secrets, the policeman who abuses his authority or neglects to perform his duty, the legal institutions that hamper or prevent bringing officials to account, the absence of legal institutions to enforce the accountability of officials, the provisions of the house rules that limit the openness of Parliament's proceedings, etc.—all this seriously violates political freedom and hampers its assertion.

The development of a coherent and harmonized system of political values is not a simple task and involves more than just setting norms. Essentially a coherent and harmonized scale of values, one that determines the behavior of the entire value-setting political movement, leadership and collective respectively, and the behavior of their individual members as well, can be the result of only a societywide historical process. This process can be consciously accelerated, the formulated system of values refined, and the openness of formulating values broadened. The formulation and validation of a system of political values that society has accepted can take place and be reinforced only within the framework of democratic processes.

The real medium that consolidates a system of political values is a democratically organized and functioning political system, one in which collectives organize themselves and engage in politics democratically.

The Principles of Democratic Political Reforms

Compared with the abstract requirements of the political values, the principles of forming a democratic political system are more specific in identifying and summing up the desirable changes.

We can derive the principles of democratic political reforms from the political system's diagnosis, its critical evaluation. The present political system's "system-specific" characteristics, the principles that determine the entire system, must undergo radical changes.

The diagnosis is the most important step in a reform program's elaboration. The principles of the changes to be made can be derived from the diagnosis, and from the democratic political values that are judged desirable.

The principles of the political system's democratic transformation are as follows:

1. The political system's predominant determining role must be reduced in all the social subsystems (the economy, education, culture, etc.). A prerequisite for achieving this is to ensure that the different political views are brought to the surface and are institutionally articulated, and that the so-called other mediation system is developed for this purpose. Only the open and overseeable functioning of the institutions that mediate the stratum, group and collective interests and wills to the political sphere, the interplay and mutual constraint of the political forces, can ensure that politics plays the determining role in its particular area and sphere. As social subsystems maintained by specific individuals, the economy, culture, education, etc. are unable to suppress and curb political voluntarism, and to mediate the political will modified in accordance with the particular logic, rationality and laws of the individual social subsystems. To do so, it is necessary to ensure the politicization of the individual subsystems' segmented structure of interests and aspirations, enabling them to become a power-influencing political force, and also to develop the mechanism by which the heterogeneous political forces exercise mutual constraint upon one another. All this can lead to the avoidance of political voluntarism, of the political will's excessive and "unrestrained" interference.

2. The centralized system of distribution and redistribution in society's integration and reproduction must be relaxed, and its nature reformed. The proportion of centralized national income should be reduced by between 10 and 15 percentage points from what it is now (between 63 and 65 percent). To reform the content of central distribution and redistribution is even more important than to limit the proportion of centralized national income. The system of withdrawing and redistributing income should operate: (1) without any hierarchic order; (2) under public scrutiny and accountability; and (3) on the basis of principles laid down in normatives. The power of the administrative apparatus in charge of redistribution must be sharply curtailed, and public oversight of its activity must be ensured through the institutions of direct and indirect democracy (Parliament, the councils, interest alliances, etc.).

3. The political system's party-centricity and the centralization within the party must be relaxed. The legal principles and rules of the party's society-guiding activity must be elaborated, and its power legally curbed. Provisions must be introduced that will enable every party organization, governing body and leader to act only within the limits set by the Constitution and constitutional laws. The holding of a plurality of offices simultaneously must be banned by law and the party's rules. The interlocking of state and party positions and organs must cease.

4. The monopolistic (exclusive) possession of power must be transformed into an alliance-based hegemonistic power bloc of the political forces and movements, a bloc in which the Communist Party wins and maintains its dominant (but not autocratic) role by political means.

5. The various political forces must be guaranteed their right to democratically organize themselves and participate in the collective (alliance- and consensus-based) possession of supreme power. The political system's pluralism must be institutionalized.

6. The spheres of decisionmaking authority must be drastically decentralized, starting with the party's central organs. In the vertical separation of power the principle must be enforced that all questions have to be decided locally, allowing those who are affected to make the decisions directly or through their institutions, and only the matters that cannot be decided locally are to be submitted to higher organs. Every higher organ is directly accountable for its decisions, to those whom the decisions affect. This accountability cannot be passed "downward," and the lower organs cannot be forced to agree with the higher organs' decisions.

7. Drastic organizational deconcentration must be carried out in every sphere. In the economy, the political sphere, the system of voluntary public organizations, and education, at the levels of local public administration, the organizations' right to split off and the right to form independent (and even alternative) organizations must be guaranteed.

8. The concentration of power has to be replaced with the institutional separation of power, both within and between party and state organizations. Institutional safeguards are necessary against the concentration of power in central and local institutions, against the development of relationships of absolute dependence.

9. Office and spheres of authority in party, state and other organizations must be separated institutionally. The ban on the infringement of authority must be enforced. The autonomy of office in organizations must be guaranteed, also vertically.

10. A democratic system of representing interests must be established in place of the bureaucratic and nonformalized systems of taking interests into consideration.

11. The democratic power-overseeing and -influencing role of freedom of the press and political openness must be guaranteed. Restrictions of freedom of the press and freedom of expression must be punished very severely.

12. Every stage of preparing and making decisions, and the contribution of every participating organization, institution and leader toward shaping the deciding will (including the decision-influencing actions of the party apparatus) must be made entirely public and open to criticism. The power of the apparatuses responsible for preparing and implementing the decisions must be curbed, and the effectiveness must be guaranteed of representative and collective direction, control and accountability. The political and voluntary public oversight of the bureaucracies must be ensured by means of strict accountability and openness.

13. Statutory regulations must transform the system of personal dependence into a system of material dependence. Every elective position and office should be filled on the basis of competition or the nomination of multiple candidates, and should be open to a political contest conducted within the framework of institutional procedures.

14. The citizens' direct participating in making all decisions affecting them must be ensured within the framework of varied and guaranteed procedures.

15. The articulation of the pluralism of interests within political organizations, the free formation and operation of corporative decision-influencing organizations, and the establishment of alternative interest-representing corporations and organizations must be guaranteed. (Democratic corporatism or democracy-reinforcing corporatism.)

III. Institutional Reforms

Institutional reforms must objectify the democratic political values and reform principles, and also guarantee their assertion.

The institutional reforms must extend to practically every element and dimension of the political system. A radical reform of our political system, which evolved about 40 years ago and since then has remained unchanged in many respects, can be carried out in several ways and at various rates. Of course, one has to take into account the always present danger that the political forces opposed to reform might gain the upper hand.

The democratic reforms will have to be launched in a reform-alien power structure, and in a system of institutions in which democracy is lacking. It is necessary to reckon also with the fact that mostly antireform forces will control the instruments of institutionalized power during the initial stage of reform changes. These fundamental interrelations will determine the nature and essence of the conflicts accompanying the reforms, and the alignment of the political forces and factors arguing for and against reforms.

The most difficult task is to launch the reforms. This is more difficult than to continue, deepen and broaden the reforms already begun; and likewise more difficult than to consistently achieve the reforms' set objectives.

Although the institutional reforms are specific objectives that have been set in the course of democratic debate and are based on democratic consensus, the very fact that they are specific immediately causes conflicts and generally evokes ideological and political disputes. Therefore it is particularly important that we make the right choices also regarding the timing of the reforms, their expansion and depth.

Every reform measure requires responsible political deliberation, an objective assessment of the necessary and feasible changes and actions. Collective knowledge and common will can enhance the political wisdom essential to the reforms' success.

The implementation of reforms that would require concentrated effort and the undertaking of societywide conflicts, but would affect just a few elements of the political system, yet its most important ones (the party system, an alternative trade-union movement and alternative representation of the workers' interests, enterprise self-management, the adoption of a new constitution, and the calling of special elections), does not seem a feasible solution in the present political situation. It does not seem feasible for the following reasons: (1) initially the reforms would have to be launched and then continued in a reform- and democracy-alien power structure and system of institutions; (2) the forces opposed to democratic reforms are still in control of the institutional instruments of power; (3) there is an ongoing debate within society on the democratic reforms' principles and objectives; and (4) society must consider also the timing of the reforms, their depth and mode of implementation.

In contrast with the radical, intensive and total reforms requiring concentrated effort, it seems a better solution to launch and carry out extensive reforms in many areas simultaneously, so that they may gradually reinforce one another's effect.

The extensive nature of the reforms and their gradual escalation (by launching the reforms in fairly many areas simultaneously, and then resolutely expanding them more and more) will prevent the antireform political forces from concentrating their opposition in a single area and foiling the reform's unwavering and consistent implementation.

The reforms' extensive nature also means that there will be a fairly wide gap between the objectives to be achieved in the reform process, and the initial measures and results during the launching of the reform process. But this does not constitute abandonment of the reform objectives; it is merely conscious consideration of, and allowance for, the political necessities and conditions.

The proposed reform-launching institutional changes and modifications are the initial reform measures toward developing a democratic socialist political system. Conforming to the requirement of extensiveness, the initial reform measures extend to practically every element of the political system. They can be implemented within the framework of the existing institutionalized power structure, but their restructuring and system-modifying effect will make itself felt only later, when the pace of the reforms accelerates and the final objectives are realized.

Our specific proposals for institutional reforms have been drafted in the spirit of this reform alternative. They must be amended and made more precise in the course of democratic public debate, and the democratically formed public has to transform them into specific reform objectives.

1. Establishment and Strengthening of Party Democracy

a) The Constitution and a separate Party Law must regulate the party's constitutional rights and obligations that stem from its political leading role.

b) The authority of the party's central and local organs and leaders may not exceed the scope specified in the Party Law and the statutory regulations that are in force. (Enforcement of accountability, requests for reports, nomination of candidates, the right to be consulted, etc.) The statutory regulations that are in force apply also to the party's organizations, and they are both politically and legally responsible for complying with such regulations.

c) The plurality of leadership positions held simultaneously in the party and in state and sociopolitical organizations must be prohibited.

d) The party organs, governing bodies and leadership positions qualified to exercise the constitutional authority stemming from the party's political leading role, as well as the rights and obligations necessary for this purpose, must be regulated comprehensively and unambiguously.

e) With due consideration for the requirements of creating a democratic party and a democratic political system, new party rules must be adopted that regulate the party's internal operation and organizational structure, and the rights and obligations of its members and bodies. The draft of the new party rules must be submitted to public debate.

f) The solutions and instruments that the new party rules should propose to institutionalize a democratic party structure are as follows:

—The obligation to conduct politics openly must apply to every party body (the Central Committee, Politburo, local party committees, the Central Committee's working collectives, etc.). They must be under a general obligation to make public, immediately and in full, the drafts of the decisions and alternatives, the standpoints presented in the debates, and the adopted decisions.

—The speakers in a debate may make their views and standpoints public, and may ask the party membership to concur.

—Before the party's forums and in open party proceedings, anyone may adhere to his minority opinion and freely advocate it even after a decision has been made.

—Freedom to profess contrasting opinions must be recognized also within the party. (Freedom to present platforms.)

—Those who profess similar opinions may compare them and vote jointly. (Freedom to form factions.)

—Several candidates may be nominated for each elective office and seat in the party bodies. The candidates must outline their political ideas, if the voters electing them so require.

—Party leaders (including the general secretary) may be elected only by ballot.

—The procedures must be regulated for recalling party leaders (including the general secretary) and members of the party's governing bodies.

—Mandatory rules on rotation must be introduced, and party leaders must be limited to a maximum of two terms in office.

—Instead of the principle of democratic centralism, the local party organs must be guaranteed a legal status that gives them independence. The regulation of matters in which the lower party organs may be issued directives and are bound by the resolutions of the higher party organs must be kept within narrow limits. In all other matters the lower party organs may not be issued directives and must not be subordinated to the higher party organs.

g) The party's economic apparatus must publish an annual report on the state of the party's finances, the sources of its revenues, their use and expenditure.

h) The legal status of the party organizations at plants and institutions must be regulated anew, freeing them of their formal obligation to participate in the management of the plants and institutions.

i) The party nominates its own candidates for elections to the National Assembly and the councils, but it must not prevent the nomination of also other party members at the nominating meetings.

j) The persons whom the party organs propose for state office, and the reasons for recommending them, must be made public in advance.

2. Reform of National Assembly's Legal Status

The party is society's leading political force, but supreme authority is vested in the National Assembly!

a) The party's governing bodies and apparatus must restore to the National Assembly its legislative power. In the legislative process, the practice must be institutionalized of submitting legislative matters of constitutional significance to a national referendum for decision and

approval. Public debate on the more important draft bills, and their parliamentary debate in two rounds, must be ensured. The party's governing bodies must make public their proposals and comments regarding legislative bills, and must support these proposals and comments openly in Parliament.

b) The right of National Assembly deputies to freely address questions to ministers must be guaranteed. The provisions of the house rules that limit the openness of parliamentary proceedings or the deputies' right to address questions to ministers must be changed. The institution of closed sessions must be abolished.

c) Deputies may refer in parliamentary debates to independent experts and alternative sources of information.

d) More frequent and longer sessions of Parliament must be convened to ensure that the fundamental legal relationships of citizens are regulated only by laws, and that Parliament remains the natural forum for public debate.

e) Deputies of one mind must bee free to form factions. The formation of a parliamentary faction must be reported.

f) Votes of confidence on the government's program and policies must be institutionalized. Any deputy must be able to present a motion for a vote of confidence. The voting on such motions, or to elect officials, must be by ballot.

g) Provisions must be made to enable deputies to serve also as full-time legislators, and to maintain an office and a staff of experts necessary to properly discharge their duties as deputies.

3. Election of a Chief of State by Popular Vote

a) The Presidential Council of the People's Republic, together with its authority to amend laws and to act for the National Assembly when it is not in session, must be abolished.

b) The powers of the chief of state must be vested in a President of the Republic who is elected to a 7-year term of office by the citizens eligible to vote. The President of the Republic may be reelected once at most. The democratic order of nominating candidates for President must be regulated in detail. The President of the Republic may not hold any other public political office or have a seat in any such body.

c) When the government is voted down, the President of the Republic dismisses the cabinet and proposes a new prime minister to Parliament. The prime minister-designate must submit to Parliament his program and list of cabinet members, on which Parliament votes by ballot.

d) The President of the Republic exercises the powers of the chief of state. For his activity he is directly accountable to the voters.

4. The Electoral System's Reform

a) Freedom to nominate candidates must be guaranteed! The nomination of official (PPF) candidates must cease. Every candidate must be free to organize meetings with voters to outline his program. Limits on the number of candidates, and also the requirement of a mandatory number of candidates (two candidates mandatory) must cease.

b) Every candidate must be free to disseminate and make public his election program.

c) A separate and independent Election Tribunal must be set up to oversee the election process. Behavior that restricts the nomination of candidates, the presentation of election programs or canvassing must be declared a criminal offense.

d) Let the party nominate its candidates. But as long as there is a one-party system, it must not be mandatory for a party member to support the party's candidate or to withdraw from the race if he himself is not the party's candidate. (In the case of a multiparty system, of course, these provisions would have to be modified.)

e) On the national list, if retained, the interest-representing, professional, religious and scientific organs specified in the Electoral Law, and the party would nominate candidates and would have to make public the reasons underlying their choice.

5. Reform of the System of Government

a) The preponderance of government-overshadowing informal power that the Politburo and the central party apparatus wield must cease.

b) The government is directly accountable to Parliament for the implementation of the government's own program that Parliament has approved, for directing the state administrative apparatus that implements the program, and for law enforcement.

c) The weak administrative government must be transformed into a political government vested with strong authority, but strictly subordinated to Parliament. The safeguards that ensure the political government's legal status and independent executive role are as follows:

—The government drafts its own program and submits it to Parliament for approval.

—The government is accountable for the performance of national tasks not included in its program only if such tasks have been mandated by Parliament. In which case Parliament must provide the necessary (legal, financial, organizational and personnel) conditions for the performance of the tasks.

—The government may return its mandate to Parliament, and Parliament is obliged to accept it.

—The government may propose to the President of the Republic that he dissolve Parliament and schedule new general elections. (This applies only under a multiparty system.)

—Ministers without portfolio, but with assigned specific duties, must be added to the cabinet.

—To relieve the work load of the Council of Ministers and to strengthen flexible implementation, an inner cabinet must be formed from among members of the cabinet (the prime minister, his deputies, and the heads of the key ministries).

—Cabinet members are directly accountable for their activity to the prime minister and the Council of Ministers.

d) Detailed and regular reports on cabinet meetings must be provided not only for Parliament, but for the general public as well. The government's obligation to provide information must be laid down by law.

e) Under a one-party system, the prime minister may not hold party office or be a member of the Politburo.

f) Let the chief of state, rather than the party's governing bodies and the party apparatus, nominate the ministers, and let Parliament approve his nominations. Let also the party's leaders and governing bodies openly criticize and evaluate the activities of ministers.

g) Ministers are accountable primarily for the policies of their area of responsibility (or branch). Primarily the state secretary for administration must be responsible for the continuous and professional operation of the ministry's apparatus and for its compliance with statutory regulations.

h) Mandatory professional and law examinations, respectively competitive tests and suitable specialized educational qualifications must be set as requirements for appointment to the ministry apparatus.

i) Ministers do not have original authority to regulate the rights and obligations of citizens by decree.

j) The ministries' authority must be decentralized considerably, and the apparatuses of the ministries must be reduced. At the same time, those activities and decisions of the ministries that lend themselves readily to public

oversight must be transferred to elected bodies and committees of experts that are independent of the ministries. To ensure the more effective and professionally better-founded preparation of decisions, experts who are not built into the office hierarchy must be added to the apparatuses of the ministries.

6. Establishment of an Independent Constitutional Court

a) An independent Constitutional Court must replace the Council on Constitutional Law. On the proposal of the President of the Republic, let Parliament elect the justices of the Constitutional Court, for life.

b) Justices of the Constitutional Court may not belong to any state, party or voluntary public political organizations. The Constitutional Court is also independent of the judiciary.

c) The Constitutional Court oversees compliance with the Constitution and constitutional laws, and the constitutionality of legislation.

d) The interpretations and findings of the Constitutional Court (in its rulings on questions of principles as well as in specific cases) are final and binding on everyone.

e) The Constitutional Court functions as a tribunal of seven to nine justices.

f) Any organization, institution or citizen may petition the Constitutional Court and request the enforcement of the petitioner's constitutional rights.

7. Establishment of an Administrative Court

a) An Administrative Court must be organized within the framework of the regular judiciary.

b) As the general rule, the decisions of administrative agencies in individual cases may be challenged before the court. The decisions that may not be challenged before the court, and the ones whose execution will not be stayed when challenged, must be enumerated.

8. Enhancing the Power and Independence of the Judiciary

a) The election of judges must be regulated anew.

b) The judiciary must be freed completely from the supervision and control of the Ministry of Justice.

c) Legal, organizational and personnel safeguards must be in place to ensure the independence of the judiciary.

d) To halt the professional counterselection, the salaries and benefits of judges must be improved substantially.

e) The Chambers of Attorneys and the law societies must be made fully independent, and must be freed in every respect from the supervision of the Ministry of Justice.

9. Territorial Self-Government and Democratic Local Power

a) Party-centricity must be diluted also in the organization of local power, and the preponderance of the megye party organizations' informal power must be curbed. The means by which this can be achieved are as follows: the proposed establishment of party democracy; imposing on local party organizations of the obligation to conduct their political activities openly; significant curtailment and normative regulation of their authority; a strict ban on any infringement of authority and on interference that violates the autonomy of other organizations; abolition of a significant proportion of the local party organizations' authority over cadres (before the appointment or election, the informal nomination or approval of, or insistence on, specific candidates for the posts of university rectors and college directors general, economic managers, school principals, prosecutors in charge of offices of public prosecution, and police chiefs), retaining their right to vet only the candidates for the posts of local political leaders; termination of the local economic, educational, scientific, cultural, law-enforcement and sport organs' obligation to report to the local party organizations; and a ban on the plurality of public and political offices held simultaneously (for example, first secretary of the megye party committee, deputy of the National Assembly, and also a member of the megye council's executive committee).

b) Rotation of the megye, municipal and village party organizations' elected leaders must be made mandatory.

c) To prevent the concentration of local power, the autonomy of the local economic, educational, cultural, press, public-administration and sport organs must be guaranteed, both in the vertically structured power mechanism and in their horizontal relations. As the general rule, only the state organizations in charge of overseeing legality may supervise the activities of local governments. The election or appointment of local-government officials must not be subject to any preliminary or subsequent approval. Local governments must be free to adopt norms governing their internal organization, without having to submit them for subsequent approval. Their obligation to report must be limited to reporting only to their constituents and workers. Local governments must be free to form, and to withdraw from, horizontally organized professional and territorial federations.

d) The centers of local public administration and self-government must be transferred from the megye and municipal party organs to the councils, the local representative and administrative organs.

e) The councils' vertical subordination must cease. The councils must be able to elect or appoint their officials without the approval of the higher councils' organs, and to adopt their ordinances without submitting them for subsequent approval. They must have complete independence in managing their local revenues and the subsidies they receive from central redistribution.

f) Conditions (advance notice, suitable premises, etc,) must be provided to ensure the openness of council meetings. Village meetings must be vested with authority to decide certain issues, notably the merger or separation of villages, and the forming of school districts.

g) To strengthen direct democracy, and to safeguard the authority and autonomy of local leaders, the council chairmen at every level must be elected by popular vote.

h) Before decisions on administrative and organizational changes in villages merged under political pressure, the council must be required to consult the local residents, by holding a local referendum or a village meeting.

[i) is missing in original text]

j) Towns and villages must have the right to start local newspapers.

k) Residents must be able to offer proposals and decision alternatives for the agenda of council meetings. When a specified number of signatures has been gathered, the proposal's inclusion on the agenda must be mandatory. The gathering and safekeeping of the signatures must be the duty of the council apparatus.

l) The Council Affairs Office of the Council of Ministers must be abolished. The megye, municipal and village councils must be allowed to form a national federation. The governing bodies of the national federation of megye councils must be democratically elected interest-representing organs, with the right to nominate candidates running on the national list in elections to the National Assembly, and to participate through their representatives in preparing and making decisions that affect their members. Member organizations join the federation voluntarily, and membership does not subordinate them to the federation.

m) Towns and villages must be free to form national and territorial (recreational-area, regional and economic-district) federations, in accordance with the principles outlined above.

[10.] Laws on Popular and Indirect Initiatives, and on National and Local Referendums Needed

a) The citizens' right to introduce proposals by initiative must be recognized as a fundamental civil right. Regulation of its procedures and safeguards requires the enactment of a separate law. On any issue that affects the

community, any citizen or collective is free to start gathering signatures; to present a petition, proposal or protest; to organize meetings; and to use the mass media.

When a sufficient number of signatures has already been gathered, the local administrative organs are obliged to provide premises and personnel to gather signatures and certify the documents. This is an official duty, an official instrument and guaranty of asserting the citizen's right to introduce proposals by initiative. But it does not mean the local administrative organization's commitment to the given initiative.

When the number of signatures specified by law has been gathered, the organization to which the initiative is addressed and which has the necessary authority (the National Assembly, council, corporative organization, etc.) must place the initiative on its agenda and consider it on its merits. The organization or body that considers the initiative is not obliged to adopt it. But it is obliged to inform the initiative's sponsors of its own standpoint, and to invite a representative of the sponsors to the meeting at which it will consider the initiative.

The sponsors of an initiative may address it also to an international organization, and they may seek, establish and maintain relations also with the authors of similar initiatives in other countries.

b) As important instruments of direct democracy and participation, the institutions of national and local referendums require detailed regulation in a separate law. The law must specify in detail which organs may order referendums on what issues, and how many signatures are needed on the initiative, to make the holding of a national, respectively of a local, referendum mandatory. National referendums must be held on acceding to or renouncing an international economic or military treaty, on a significant decision affecting the country's form of government (for example, creating the office of President of the Republic or a two-chamber National Assembly, or establishing a Constitutional Court), and on enacting a new constitutional law.

11. Detailed Regulation of Human Rights in a Separate Law

a) A "Bill of Human Rights" must be drafted, based on the international agreements that Hungary has signed and ratified; furthermore, on the democratic political values and principles, and the provisions of the Hungarian Constitution (Section 54).

b) A Law on Human Rights must be enacted by national referendum, after extensive public debate. Amendments to the law would also require referendums.

c) The human rights and their guaranties must be enumerated comprehensively and in detail (the catalog of human rights).

In the case of political, economic, social and educational freedoms it is necessary to specify the ones that apply as an obligation imposed on all state and other organizations to refrain from restricting or violating them. Any restriction or violation of these freedoms must be made a criminal offense. (For example, any violation of freedom of speech, freedom of conscience, freedom to demonstrate, freedom of self-organization, etc.)

Special safeguards are needed to entrench human rights in cases when positive action on the part of state organs and suitable performance of their mandated tasks guarantee some human right. (For example, the maintenance of educational or welfare institutions, providing premises and staff for gathering signatures, etc.).

d) The "Bill of Human Rights" must regulate in detail the following, among others:

- Freedom of opinion and expression;
- Freedom of self-organization;
- Freedom of peaceful assembly and association;
- Freedom of conscience and religion;
- Freedom to demonstrate and march;
- The right to choose one's work freely (including work abroad);
- The right to a passport, including the right to leave the country;
- Universal equal suffrage and secret ballot, including freedom to campaign and to present a program;
- Freedom to sponsor initiatives and to petition national and local referendums;
- Freedom of the press (regulated in detail in a separate law);
- Academic freedom, and freedom to conduct scientific research and to publish (regulated in detail in a separate law);
- Freedom to use one's native language, freedom to complete education at every level in one's native language, and freedom to choose one's cultural and ethnic identity;
- Freedom to maintain relations with members of the same cultural, ethnic, or religious group, in whatever country;
- The right to work and to social security, and entitlement to a minimum pension as a civil right;
- The right to guaranteed free health care;
- The right to rest and recreation, and the prohibition of employment jeopardizing this right;
- The right to a healthy environment, and the prohibition of environmental pollution;
- Protection of the family and of its integrity, and children's rights;
- The right to live without fear, and strict prohibition of human bondage;
- Protection of privacy and correspondence, and the inviolability of one's home;
- Restrictions on the gathering of data, their confidentiality, and the ban on disclosing personal data from central files.

The above catalog of human rights is by no means complete, and many of the rights and freedoms require detailed regulation in separate laws.

e) Safeguards are necessary to prevent the restriction or violation of human rights also through the blanket provisions of statutory regulations or through lower-level decrees and judicial or administrative decisions. To protect his human rights, any citizen must be able to institute a lawsuit that is decided separately in summary proceedings. And as a last resort, he must have recourse to the Constitutional Court. (Introducing the institution of an ombudsman should also be considered.)

12. A Democratic Law on Associations Must Be Enacted

a) On the basis of their freedom of associations, citizens may form movements or groups that are not subject to advance notification or licensing. The activities of the movements or groups—debates, meetings, lectures, the preparation and dissemination of propaganda material—must not be restricted.

b) The present Law on Associations seriously violates the freedom of association. Therefore it is unconstitutional and must be rescinded. A new Law on Associations must establish the citizens' unrestricted right to form associations for any public purpose. The requirement of filing a notice of intent to form an association must be abolished. Forming an association may involve only the obligation to register the association once it has been formed. If the application for registration is rejected, the association's organizers must have recourse to the courts. The appropriate state organs may oversee only the legality of the associations' activities.

c) Associations must be free to join regional or national, and professional or branch federations.

d) As a part of the freedom of association, it is necessary to recognize also the freedom of economic, cultural, administrative, educational, etc. organizations, respectively of employees and employers with common interests, to form interest-safeguarding organizations. (Freedom to form corporative organizations, associations and movements.) The formation of alternative corporative organizations must also be allowed in every area. Membership in the corporations, associations and federations must never be mandatory.

13. A Democratic Trade-Union Law Must Be Enacted

To safeguard the interests of employees, a separate Trade-Union Law must regulate the following:

• The right to form trade unions, and the possibilities of exercising that right;
• Freedom to form alternative trade unions;
• Freedom to choose the type of trade-union contract (craft, industry, etc.);

• The principal guaranties of the trade unions' internal democracy;
• The financing of the trade unions' operations;
• Freedom to form and join (industry, craft, local and national) trade-union federations;
• The right of the trade-union federations to nominate candidates running on the national list;
• The rules that guarantee the trade unions' independence and autonomy;
• The rules on incompatibility associated with trade-union office;
• The right to strike, and procedures for the mandatory negotiations that must be held before a strike can be called;
• The trade unions' freedom to join international federations, and the procedures for doing so;
• The management-related rights of the trade unions in the workers' councils and enterprise councils must be regulated in detail (in the Trade-Union Law, and not in the Labor Code).

14. A Law Defining the Political, Social, Educational, and Economic Rights of Youth Must Be Enacted

a) Youths may form independent political organizations of their own, based on self-organizing principles they themselves choose.

b) The party must assert its leading role through the set of instruments of open and democratic politics, rather than through its license to appoint the youth organizations' leaders.

c) The stratum organizations for youths must be free to form and join youth federations.

15. University Autonomy and Academic Freedom

a) Universities and colleges must become autonomous educational and scientific-research organizations. To this end, the local (megye, municipal and district) party organs' license to vet university rectors and college directors general before their appointment, the close party control over higher educational institutions, and the practically unlimited interference and informal power of the local party organs must cease. Universities and colleges must have no obligation whatsoever to report to the local and the national party apparatuses.

b) The Ministry of Culture and Education must exercise only oversight of the higher educational institutions. It should assert its authority to direct and control only through legislation and appointments (rectors, directors general, deans, and university professors and docents).

c) Higher educational institutions must be entirely independent in matters relating to their curricula. The ministry should regulate only the conditions for issuing diplomas, to ensure that the standards for the recognition and acceptance of the diplomas have been met.

d) Academic freedom must be guaranteed. For senior faculty members (professors and docents), academic freedom means that they are free to offer main courses of lectures, and to choose the syllabi. In the case of students, academic freedom means that they are free to choose courses and instructors.

e) Universities and colleges must be allowed to set their own admission requirements, and to determine the number of students they will admit. Their decisions regarding admissions must be final.

f) Students and eminent scientists must be given a bigger role in managing the institutions of higher learning.

g) The rights of universities to confer honorary doctorates, and to invite foreign or domestic lecturers must be unlimited, and free of any control, encumbrance or restriction by the party apparatus.

h) A Hungarian citizen who holds a secondary school-leaving certificate must not have to obtain permission to continue his studies at a foreign university or college, or to supplement his domestic higher education there.

16. A Press Law That Guarantees Freedom of the Press

a) Freedom of the press must be regulated as a comprehensive freedom that includes:

- Freedom to start a publication;
- Freedom to produce a publication;
- Freedom of opinion and expression in the press;
- Freedom to disseminate a publication.

b) Freedom of the press is primarily the citizen's freedom to use the press as a means of disseminating ideas. It is also freedom of the journalist to seek information, and to report facts, ideas and views.

c) A new Press Law is necessary, one whose principles and detailed regulations have first been submitted to wide public debate.

d) The government's obligations to provide information must be laid down in the Press Law. (A detailed reform proposal must be elaborated as a separate draft.)

17. Strengthening Enterprise and Cooperative Democracy and Self-Management

a) Parallel with giving enterprises and cooperatives complete economic independence, it is also necessary to develop the organizations of enterprise self-management, the democratic institutions and procedures for reconciling the interests of employees and employers.

b) Enterprise and cooperative self-management makes exercising the owner's rights possible.

c) A complex system of owner's rights enables society to act as the owner. In the principal dimensions of exercising the owner's rights, asserting interests and influencing decisions, the main elements of this complex system of rights are:

- Participation by civil right in influencing and overseeing central and local economic power;
- Participation as an employee in the employees' interest-representing organizations and, through them, in making branch, territorial and national economic decisions;
- Participation by right of self-management in the management of the enterprise, in exercising the owner's rights at the enterprise level.

d) The complex system of society's rights as owner and of enterprise self-management rights must be regulated in detail, in a separate Law on Public Ownership.

e) The democratic safeguards of the new collective forms of enterprise management must be strengthened. The primary precondition for this is to curb, and then to end, the redistributive bureaucracy's power to manage the economy.

18. A Professional, Legal, and Effective Police Force, but Under Society's Democratic Control

a) The powers of the police must be strictly and clearly regulated by law. (Investigating powers; conditions under which identification papers may be checked; use of firearms; carrying out arrests; gathering data and taking photographs; methods of obtaining information and the restrictions on them; safeguards against abuse of power, etc.)

b) Pretrial custody must be approved by the court (or the examining magistrate), and the conditions for pretrial custody must be regulated more clearly.

c) The issuance and administration of passports must be transferred to the councils.

d) The police powers that violate the citizen's rights and freedoms must be abolished. (For example, parcel searches, unwarranted checks of identification papers, etc.).

Detailed elaboration of the proposed institutional reforms is in part a task for experts. And in part the proposals will require society's democratic confirmation.

The proposals affect practically every area of the political system and exercise of power. The objective is the coordinated launching of many small reforms, so that their mutual reinforcing effects may gradually evolve. A more detailed and more thorough elaboration of the reforms for democratic restructuring will be the task of the unfolding democratic reform movement.

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